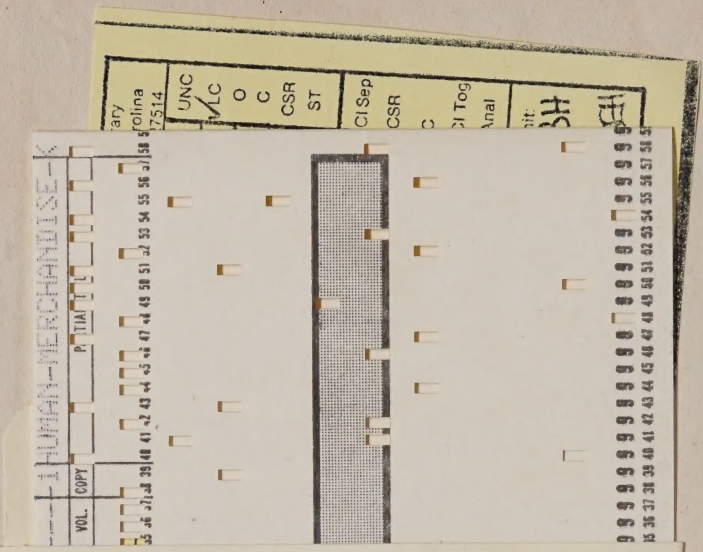


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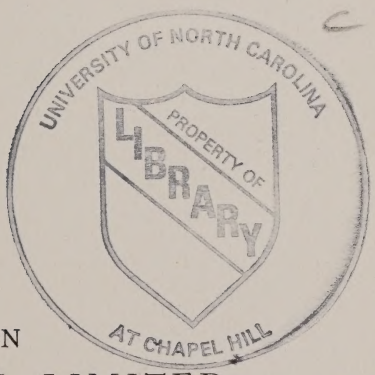
HUMAN MERCHANDISE

A STUDY OF THE INTERNATIONAL
TRAFFIC IN WOMEN

BY

H. Wilson Harris

1928
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In Memoriam

JOSEPHINE BUTLER

1828—1906

"For their works do follow them."

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION ix

PART I

CONDITIONS TO-DAY

CHAPTER

I. THE PROBLEM IN ITS SETTING 15

II. THE CASE FOR ENQUIRY 25

III. LETTING IN LIGHT 37

IV. HOW THE TRAFFIC WORKS 48

PART II

A DETAILED INVESTIGATION

V. WESTERN EUROPE (Great Britain, Holland, Belgium, France, Spain, Portugal) 57

VI. CENTRAL EUROPE (Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary) . . . 92

VII. EASTERN EUROPE (Latvia, Poland, Rumania, Greece, Turkey) 125

VIII. NORTH AFRICA (Algeria, Tunis, Egypt) . . 152

IX. ANGLO-SAXON AMERICA (Canada, United States) 170

X. LATIN-AMERICA (Mexico, Cuba, Panama, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentine Republic) 187

PART III

FIGHTING THE TRAFFIC

XI. INTERNATIONAL ACTION 229

XII. THE MAISON TOLÉRÉE 244

XIII. PROTECTING THE CHILD 252

XIV. THE PUBLIC'S PART 259

INDEX 271

INTRODUCTION

THE Report on the Traffic in Women and Children published by the League of Nations in two parts, in March, 1927, and December, 1927, respectively, is a document of unique social significance. Never before have the allied problems of prostitution itself and of the transport of women and girls from one country to another for purposes of prostitution been made the subject of a systematic investigation comparable in extent or thoroughness with this, valuable though earlier and more limited studies, like Dr Abraham Flexner's " Prostitution in Europe," are.

There may be those who feel that nothing is gained and something lost by attempting to give the statements and conclusions of the investigators a wider currency and presenting them, as this volume does, in a more convenient and accessible form than they assume in the foolscap pages of the official report. I understand that view but do not share it. All the balance of advantage, as I see it, is in favour of letting in more light on evils that batten on darkness. The presentation of vice is

only dangerous when it is alluring. There is nothing alluring about these drab pictures of the degradation of womanhood. They are uniformly sordid and repellent. They may distress the casual reader ; they can never attract—though the astonishing underworld revealed by the investigators has undeniably an interest of its own from its very unfamiliarity.

Another aspect of the question, or perhaps the same aspect in another light, is more difficult. Most of us have those near us whom we shrink from bringing face to face with the darker sides of life before we need. But that consideration would carry more weight if we could be sure they would not be brought face to face with them in any case, perhaps more painfully or more dangerously, without our knowledge. In her recent autobiographical volume, "My Apprenticeship," Mrs. Sidney Webb mentions that when at the age of thirteen she asked her father whether she might read "Tom Jones" he told her to do so by all means, adding that a healthy-minded girl could read anything, and the more she knew about human nature the better for her and for all the men connected with her. There is much more to be said for that doctrine than against it.

The argument for ventilation in this case is

strong. To ignore an evil is not to eradicate it. If this particular evil is to be eradicated it must first be understood, as the League's investigators have enabled us to understand it. I have seen far too much of the effectiveness of publicity at Geneva in the past eight years to believe that any good can come of concealment in a matter such as this. Though the investigation into an evil like the traffic in women must be conducted by experts, the main weapon against the evil when once exposed must be public opinion. The anxiety of various Governments when the report came before them to explain away or to remedy abuses that brought their country into discredit shows how sensitive Governments can be to the opinion of the world. But that opinion must be instructed, and official documents, even when they embody facts as arresting as the report in question, are not often widely read.

Hence this volume, which aims at associating, as concisely as is consistent with accuracy, the main features of the investigators' reports, a brief study of the prostitution for which the traffic exists and a rather fuller discussion of methods of attack on both. As to the treatment adopted, it can only be said that any writer on such a subject must use plain language or none at all. As to the arrange-

ment, Section II consists of digests of the twenty-eight investigations recorded in Part II of the League Report. Sections I and III deal respectively with the conditions precedent to the investigation and with possible roads to reform, and are not based on particular documents except where so indicated.

One personal word is called for. Since her name nowhere appears except as that of the secretary of the Body of Experts, it is doing the bare minimum of justice to say that to Dame Rachel Crowdy, Head of the Social Section of the League of Nations Secretariat, more than to any other single person, is due the success the international campaign against the traffickers in women is increasingly achieving through the agency of the League.

Finally, this book, it need hardly be emphasised, is in no way intended to take the place of the Report itself. Every serious social student should have before him the full official text.*

H. Wilson Harris.

December, 1927.

* Obtainable from the League of Nations' publication agents, Messrs. Constable and Co., 12, Orange Street, London W.C.2 (in two parts, 2s. and 7s. 6d. respectively); or the World Peace Foundation, 40, Mount Vernon Street, Boston, U.S.A., 50c. and $2.

Part I

CONDITIONS TO-DAY

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM IN ITS SETTING

The investigations into the Traffic in Women and Children conducted by the League of Nations in the years 1924, 1925 and 1926 concerned only one aspect of the world-wide and world-old problem of prostitution—and that by no means an essential aspect, since prostitution exists in abundance without the traffic. That does not diminish the value of the investigation, for if prostitution is to be combated with any hope of success it must be assailed from many angles with many weapons, the moral, the hygienic and by no means least the legislative and administrative. If by recourse to the latter instrument in particular the traffic can be reduced in volume or abolished altogether one important stimulus to the demand for illicit relations will, for reasons explained later, be removed in many countries where it is to-day a formidable factor in the maintenance of prostitution as an industry. At the same time the traffic is productive of abuses so grave and so numerous over and

above the obvious and palpable evils of normal prostitution that the case for concerted international action directed towards its suppression is unanswerable.

Nevertheless the fundamental basis of the traffic is this normal prostitution—prostitution being defined as the practice whereby certain women systematically permit men to have physical relations with them for a money payment. Prostitution as it exists in most civilised countries presents certain uniform features. The first is its complete promiscuity. While there are a few aristocrats of the profession who select their clients, even among those prepared to pay their higher charges, and deny themselves to chance-comers, the girl who walks the London streets, and still more the inmate of a continental licensed house, accepts any customer prepared to pay the money price, with no more discrimination than she would exercise in handing a glass of beer across a counter to any customer prepared to pay the money price. What that price may be varies from pounds to pence according to the age and qualities of the woman concerned.

That, in language deliberately unemotional, is prostitution in its essentials. It is a trade in which the buyer pays money for something he desires and

the seller provides something she is free either to give or to withhold because, for economic or other reasons, she prefers money to chastity. In its essence prostitution is a moral question, but in a mere objective description of it as it exists to-day the moral aspect must for the moment be left aside. The task, at this stage, is to present the facts as they are, without relation to what they should be.

How far demand produces supply, how far supply, often publicly flaunted and in any case notoriously available, stimulates demand, is hardly worth discussing at length. There is obviously both action and reaction. Even in a city so comparatively well conducted as London the localities frequented by prostitutes are a matter of common knowledge. No man intent on this form of physical indulgence would need to seek far for means of gratifying his desires. That very fact in itself unquestionably has some effect in actually creating demand. In many cases no doubt uncontrolled impulses would insist on finding satisfaction anyhow, but the ubiquity of opportunity keeps temptations to moral irregularity perpetually before any whose minds are turned in that direction at all. Since women offer themselves to men, men take advantage of the offer. But it may well—and better—be argued on the other side that

unless men first demanded it women would never sell their virtue for money. Irregular unions outside the marriage relationship are one thing. Systematic and wholly promiscuous prostitution for money payments is something fundamentally different. It may be said of the latter more unhesitatingly than of almost any other human institution that it possesses no single redeeming or palliating feature.

The reasons why an individual girl takes to prostitution are numerous. In a few cases sexual desire is present on the woman's side as well as the man's, but that would appear the exception and not the rule. Neither is the economic factor as prominent as might be supposed, even though the average European prostitute comes in the great majority of cases from families of the artisan class. Not infrequently, it is true, girls will practise occasional prostitution with a view to supplementing earnings adequate for necessities so as to provide for luxuries as well, but that is a different matter from taking deliberately to prostitution as the single means of livelihood. All the evidence goes to show that such a step is less common than is usually supposed. Girls slip into prostitution—not plunge in—from one cause or another. Rarely, if ever, is it a considered choice. Often a first

lapse, almost always before the girl is 21, and the difficulty of providing for an unwanted child, leads to what may seem at first a not intolerable means of securing the necessary income. Bad advice, moreover, is usually more generously proffered than good, and it can easily have its demoralising effect. Of 800 cases which Flexner examined in Stockholm "70 per cent. attributed their final decision to advice from tainted sources—217 from professional prostitutes, 215 from clandestine prostitutes, 81 from immoral girls, 4 from their own mothers."

However that may be, there is no question of the supply being less than the demand, even in those countries where an artificial surplus of men (through immigration) makes the volume of the demand abnormal. Prostitution takes two main forms, according to whether licensed houses of prostitution are tolerated in the country or not. In Great Britain and the United States they, of course, are not. Women therefore have to attract clients by walking the street and striking acquaintance through surreptitious signs, for open solicitation of passers-by is a misdemeanour exposing the woman to danger of arrest. But the professional prostitute is an unmistakeable figure, particularly in the neighbourhoods where she is expected to be

met with, and a man looking for an invitation can find it in a glance or a gesture.

Prostitution in itself is no offence in Great Britain, nor indeed in most other countries, for a woman is free to have relations with whom she will, and the fact that money passes does not affect the question. It is only accessories of prostitution, such as soliciting and annoying neighbours or the public, that brings the woman under the law. On the other hand, no third person can with impunity provide opportunities for prostitution by letting rooms as places of casual rendezvous,* still less systematically share a prostitute's immoral earnings. It is the heavy penalties imposed by the Criminal Law Amendment Acts of 1885 and 1912 on brothel-keepers and men who procure girls as prostitutes and live on their earnings that are responsible for England's comparative immunity from that vilest of all parasites on the community, the procurer or pimp.

Where regulation exists conditions are in some respects different. Regulation means the registration of professional prostitutes, who are thereby given a certain authorisation to ply their trade, and

* A prostitute may receive men as much as she likes in rooms which she alone regularly occupies and controls, and a landlord can let the rooms even though he may know or suspect they are used for that purpose.

are required in return to undergo frequent medical examinations, as a supposed, but in fact wholly fallacious, safeguard against the spread of venereal disease through promiscuous intercourse. The control of prostitution in regulation countries is usually in the hands of special "morals police." The existence of licensed houses may or may not form part of the regulation system, and such houses where they do exist may be of either of two types. The more indefensible of the two, where the girls are merely employees working for the profit of the proprietor of the house, who leaves them a percentage of their earnings as wages, is gradually disappearing. The other type is rather like a boarding-house for prostitutes, where the girls are their own mistresses and pay for their board and lodging, usually with exorbitant charges for extras. There are intermediate arrangements which tend to assimilate the two types. Even where regulation does prevail there are usually six or eight times as many unregistered and clandestine prostitutes who observe no restrictions.

While a good deal could no doubt be said in excuse of many individual girls who take to prostitution, if their full stories were known, the more closely the institution itself is examined the more uniformly repellent it appears. Many doctrines

about marriage are prevalent to-day, and the contention that there should be no sexual relationship unconsecrated not only by love but by actual wedlock no longer goes unchallenged. But the step from a union prompted at least by emotion however illicit to a relationship where the motive is no more and no less than a money payment is a step that must span an abyss. And from the idea of the sale of a woman's virtue for money to one man once we are carried relentlessly on to the spectacle of its systematic and habitual sale to any unknown person who presents himself and pays his price. And even that is far from showing what prostitution means. There is a quantitative side that must have its place in any true picture of this sombre characteristic of contemporary civilisation. Here descriptions break down and statistics must tell their own incredible story. "Schrank estimated," says Flexner, "that the Vienna women averaged 3 to 10 visitors daily ; but the number is known on occasions to have risen to 30 or higher. An authentic instance of 57 visitors in one day is recorded ; the Mayor of Bordeaux told the French Commission of a woman who had received 82 clients in a single day."

Those figures may be disputed. Whether the highest of them is literally accurate or not matters

little. Call it 40 instead of 80. Call it 29 instead of 57. Is the hideousness of the institution appreciably lessened? And figures enough are given by the League's investigators, though they touch on that aspect of prostitution only incidentally, to dispel any hope of taking refuge in the comfortable assumption that the picture is probably overpainted. It is not. Prostitution, as uncontested facts reveal it, can be painted only in dead black. Little, if anything, can be done to change it in character. The utmost possible in that direction is to shear off certain malignant excrescences that make it something even worse than what in its normal form it habitually is. The single hope is to reduce its volume, and to do that many agencies must be set to work simultaneously. To this it will be necessary to return when the traffic aspect of prostitution has been examined in the light of the League's enquiry. The traffic itself is excrescence from first to last. Prostitution may remain—because it cannot be stamped out by legislative enactment—but against the traffic merciless war must be declared. That campaign at least can be waged with good prospect of success, for the evil is so flagrant that no Government can long face the discredit of conviction of negligence in the matter. Here at any rate the League's tested weapon of

publicity should be decisive. Its enquiry has already served a double purpose. It has not only provided the data essential to action, but it has turned a damning limelight into some of the fouler sewers of the world.

CHAPTER II

THE CASE FOR ENQUIRY

THERE could be no greater injustice than to imply, even if it were only through unintentional omissions, that the war against the traffic in women and State regulation of prostitution began with the League of Nations. The League to-day is reaping where others have sown amid conflict, contumely and persecution. Foremost among them was Josephine Butler, and if this volume were not confined strictly to the organised efforts of the League of Nations to-day, the story of those early pioneers and the devotion and self-sacrifice they displayed would need to be told at length. As it is, it must suffice to say that if they had not broken up the stubborn ground and made the soil ready for the harvest, that harvest could never have been garnered.

As for the League of Nations itself, it has been dealing since its inception with a variety of questions affecting the welfare of women and children, but Article XXIII of the Covenant laid on it an

explicit duty in regard to one question in particular, for by that Article the States which signed the Covenant agree to " entrust the League with the general supervision over the execution of agreements with regard to the traffic in women and children and the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs."

There is a certain cynical, if unintentional, appropriateness in the coupling of the opium question with the traffic in women and children. They are only associated in this clause as a matter of convenience, but it is impossible to follow the course of the League's activities in either field with any assiduity without being impressed by the extent of the common terminology habitually applied to both evils—traffic in drugs, traffic in human bodies and human souls ; supply and demand, whether it be a foreign drug or a foreign girl ; import and export ; markets ; middlemen's profits. Even through the colourless language of the general provision in the Covenant something of the implications of the recognised technical term " commercialised vice " can be discerned.

In the course of the discussions of the League's Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children, as it was first called (the name has since been changed to Advisory Commission for the Pro-

tection and Welfare of Children and Young People and the Commission is divided into two separate Committees on (a) Traffic in Women and Children ; (b) Child Welfare), references to the so-called White Slave Traffic were necessarily frequent, and in July, 1921, a League Conference at Geneva on the Traffic in Women and Children produced a series of recommendations for action by Governments. These were brought before the League Assembly in September of the same year, and after animated discussions, in which Mr. Balfour, as he then was, took a prominent part, an international convention for the suppression of the traffic was approved and signed by a number of States, the League's Advisory Committee assuming general supervision over the execution of this and two previous conventions (those of 1904 and 1910 ; *see* Chapter III below).

States signing the convention send to Geneva periodical reports on the action they have taken to carry out its provisions, and these again in their turn necessarily lead to further discussion of the traffic and questions connected therewith.

It soon, however, became increasingly evident that little really reliable information existed about an evil which by the nature of things necessarily flourishes in secret. For that reason, at the meet-

ing of the Advisory Committee in March, 1923, the American member of the Committee, Miss Grace Abbott, who is head of the Child Welfare Bureau at Washington (a section of the Department of Labour) moved that

" An investigation be undertaken through the Secretariat of the League of Nations in order to ascertain the following facts with reference to international traffic* in women and girls :

(1) whether there is an international traffic in women and girls for purposes of prostitution ;

(2) between what countries the traffic is being carried on, and the methods used in procuring and transporting women and girls ;

(3) the effectiveness of national measures undertaken to eliminate the traffic."

It was further suggested that the investigation should include, if possible, the principal cities of the world, but failing that, typical cities in different countries, including both countries

* " International traffic has been taken to mean primarily the direct or indirect procuration and transportation for gain to a foreign country of women and girls for the sexual gratification of one or more other persons."—Report, Part I, Chap. IX.

where the regulation of prostitution exists and those where it has been abolished.

The resolution was adopted by the Committee and approved by the League Council, any financial difficulties in the way of its execution being opportunely removed by the offer of a sum of 75,000 dollars (£15,000) by the American Bureau of Social Hygiene for this express purpose. The League Council at its meeting in December, 1923, appointed a committee of eight experts to direct the enquiry, the Chairman being Dr. William F. Snow, Director of the American Social Hygiene Association, and the British member Mr. S. W. Harris, of the Home Office, one of those admirable public servants to whom the community owes far more than it ever acknowledges or suspects. The expert committee met in April, 1924, and prepared a questionnaire to be sent to the Governments of different countries, but it was recognised that the official replies received could serve at most as a basis, and that the most essential information could be obtained only through investigations personally conducted in cities where the evil was believed to be most rife. Such investigations could at the best not be easy, and might often involve actual danger to those conducting them. That was fully realised, and the small group of trained investigators

enlisted under the leadership of Mr. Bascom Johnson had no illusions as to the nature of the task they were undertaking. They were all men and women with special social training, Mr. Bascom Johnson himself being an able and experienced lawyer.

The questionnaire sent to the Governments in April, 1924, was designed to elicit official information as to the existence of the traffic and any particulars obtainable as to the sex, age and alleged trade or profession of the traffickers, as well as their social standing and the means employed by them to recruit women and transport them from one country to another. Governments were further asked whether they could throw any light on the main traffic routes and whether they observed any changes of importance in the character of the traffic since the war. Statistics on immigration and emigration were also asked for, particularly in regard to foreign women. Replies were received to the questionnaire from thirty-two Governments, including several, such as India, Japan and the Scandinavian countries, which for different reasons do not figure in the present report.

The investigation in its first phase, which is now concluded and may or may not be followed by a second, covered North, Central and South Amer-

ica, Europe, and countries on the northern coast of Africa from Algeria to Egypt. Altogether 112 cities in 28 different countries were visited. Some 6,500 persons were interviewed, 5,000 of these being actively connected with commercialised vice, either as prostitutes or souteneurs.* Employing artifices which few will hold to be illegitimate in such a case, the investigators where necessary purported to be financially interested in the traffic themselves, and thereby succeeded in establishing intimate relations with men and women all over the world engaged in exploiting the traffic for personal profit. So successful were they in this respect that they were actually passed on with recommendations and introductions from rings of traffickers in one country to their friends and confederates in another. They thus obtained the traffickers' views, as well as the Government's views, on the conditions prevailing in a given country. They were able to judge of the efficacy of existing laws by the testimony of the very people against whom those laws were directed. And they obtained incidentally one encouraging and significant testimony to the value of the League of Nations itself from a souteneur in Latvia, who observed despondingly, " It costs a lot to travel, and a boy can get

* For a definition of certain technical terms see p. 44.

tripped easy now. The League of Nations is looking after the thing. We all know what is going on."

The result of the investigation was the accumulation of a mass of verified facts such as has never before been available in this field. These were presented by the investigators to the Committee of Experts at Geneva at the end of 1926, and the question of publication was then considered. The decision reached was that the report to be drafted by the experts on the basis of the material acquired by the investigators should be presented in two parts, the first consisting of a general review of the work and of the broad conclusions to which the new facts now available pointed, the second containing detailed reports on each of the twenty-eight countries visited. In regard to the latter, it was felt to be reasonable that the Governments of the countries concerned should be given an opportunity of making any observations they might desire on disclosures which could not fail in some cases to bring their country into discredit, or to announce that they had taken, or were proposing to take, new steps to remedy the evils disclosed.

That argument was advanced at the meeting of the League of Nations Council in March, 1927, by Sir Austen Chamberlain, to whom it fell as

rapporteur to present to the Council the report of the Special Body of Experts. "As regards the action to be taken on the report," he said, "I would propose that the Council should authorise the publication of Part I, which has evidently been prepared with this object. This is a matter in which there is considerable public interest, and I see no reason why this part of the report should not be published immediately. As Part II deals with countries individually, I recommend that this part should first be sent confidentially to the various Governments, to give them an opportunity to make such observations as they may desire; these observations could subsequently be annexed to Part II of the report. I also recommend that both parts of the report should be referred to the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Women and Children —Part I in order that the Committee may consider what action it could recommend, and Part II for information until such time as the Council has received the observations of the Governments to which it has been sent. The enquiry was made on the recommendation of this Committee, and it seems right that it should have before it the results of the enquiry."

Dr. Stresemann, the German Foreign Minister, having identified himself with what Sir Austen

Chamberlain had said as to the value of the enquiry, Dr. W. F. Snow, who had acted as Chairman of the Investigators, emphasised the fact that "the concerted efforts of Governments hitherto have greatly hampered the promoters of this traffic and have steadily prevented it from attaining the large proportions which it would otherwise have reached. All Governments have done something to combat this traffic. Some countries have been placed in such circumstances as have made it possible for them to accomplish a great deal, while others have had difficulties to meet which can only be overcome if time is allowed them to perfect their methods of opposing the traffic and if the active co-operation of neighbouring countries is forthcoming." Dr. Snow added that "everywhere we have found a real interest on the part both of Governments and peoples. It is evident that there is general satisfaction that the Council has determined upon such a study, and widespread expectancy that the League will issue an authoritative report which will enable all Governments to work together more accurately towards the elimination of this evil. We are convinced that there is much to be gained in the prompt publication of the full report."

It was decided accordingly to issue the general

report forthwith, and that was done. The question of the second and fuller report came before the Council again in June, 1927, when Sir Austen Chamberlain, after observing that the League's Committee on Traffic in Women and Children felt unable to proceed usefully with the discussion of the control of prostitution until Part II of the Report of the Body of Experts had been published, proposed August 1st as the date for the publication both of Part II of the Report itself and of the observations any Governments might desire to make regarding it. On that, however, M. Vandervelde, the Belgian Foreign Minister, suggested that this did not allow the Governments sufficient time to forward their considered views, and he proposed therefore that publication should be deferred till December, 1927. Sir Austen Chamberlain accepted that proposal, and the Council so decided. The report, together with an annex containing the observations of certain Governments thereon, was actually issued on Dec. 5th in virtually its original form, the only changes made being the correction of a few minor errors of fact pointed out by the Governments and the modification of one or two unduly sweeping judgments.

The two reports constitute social documents of capital importance in the field with which

they deal. The facts they contain are the essential basis for legislative action in the countries concerned. But such legislative action is likely to be unduly delayed, and in many cases altogether inadequate, unless public opinion first informs itself and then expresses itself with emphasis. This is not an attractive subject to force on the attention of the world, but there are certain evils that can only be cured by relentless exposure. The very existence of many of the conditions described in the reports is little realised, and reluctance to face distasteful facts results only in providing shelter and immunity for an iniquitous traffic which publicity can at least impede if not eliminate.

CHAPTER III

LETTING IN LIGHT

Any action taken under the auspices of the League of Nations is international in character, and the decision of the Council to initiate the present investigation meant almost of necessity that States members of the League pledged themselves tacitly to facilitate the enquiry by giving the investigators all reasonable assistance in their task.

International co-operation for the repression of the White Slave Traffic did, in fact, already exist, three different agreements or conventions on the subject having been signed in the years 1904, 1910 and 1921 respectively. It is worth while briefly indicating the nature of these agreements, as basis for some rough estimate of the adequacy of existing measures to deal with the situation disclosed by the investigators.

(1) The 1904 Agreement was signed by the delegates of 12 nations. It provided that each signatory State should set up some central authority charged with co-ordinating all information on

the procuring of women or girls for immoral purposes abroad. Further than that, each Government undertook to establish a rigorous supervision, particularly at railway stations and ports, with a view to tracking down persons engaged in organising the White Slave Traffic. They pledged themselves in addition to give any necessary assistance to the victims of the traffic, and to take steps to repatriate such women as were ready to return to their countries. One article of the Agreement stipulated that special supervision should be exercised over employment agencies recommending situations abroad.

(2) The 1910 Agreement was negotiated partly because that of 1904 had not been found to work effectively. This second convention, signed by 13 Governments, laid more emphasis on the infliction of severe penalties on persons convicted of participation in the traffic. It first of all defined the principal offences, laying it down that heavy sentences should be imposed on :—

(a) "Any person who, to gratify the passions of another person, has procured, enticed, or led away, even with her consent, a woman or girl under age (twenty years) for immoral purposes";

(b) "Any person who, in order to gratify the passions of another person, has by fraud or by means of violence, threats, abuse of authority or any other method of compulsion led away a woman or girl over age for immoral purposes."

Other Articles in the Convention required signatories whose legislation did not cover all the offences above mentioned to strengthen it, so as to make possible the infliction of severe penalties for the commission of such acts. It was also agreed that information should be exchanged between the Governments on the measures they were taking to execute the Convention.

(3) The Convention of 1921* was negotiated through the League of Nations, which had by this time been created, and it was consequently much more extensively signed. Machinery moreover now existed for the supervision of the execution of international agreements. The main purpose of the 1921 Convention was to secure general adhesion to the provisions of the two former agreements. But it strengthened and extended these in various directions.

* For the full text of the operative clauses of the Convention see p. 45.

The age limit distinguishing minors from adults was raised from twenty to twenty-one, and special undertakings were given by the signatories regarding the legislative or administrative measures to be taken in each State for the licensing and supervision of employment agencies and for the protection of women and children arriving in a country as immigrants or leaving as emigrants.

This 1921 Convention was signed by 33 States, of which all but 7 duly ratified, while 8 other States subsequently adhered. The Convention is, therefore, in effective operation (January, 1928) in 34 countries.

The first effect of the investigation was to indicate how far States which signed the Conventions of 1904, 1910 and 1921 were duly discharging the obligations they had accepted under it. There can be no doubt, incidentally, that a result of the mere visit of an investigator to a country, and his conversations with Ministers or administrative officials, was to stimulate the authorities to a much more conscientious administration of existing laws. Certain countries indeed took immediate action at the instance of the investigators to remedy obvious defects either in their laws or in their administration. Uruguay is one case in point, and in Cuba the sequel to the investigation was a

remarkable series of reforms tending to make substantially more effective the measures directed in that country against traffickers.

For, in spite of all the conventions so far signed, there is no question at all that an organised traffic still exists on a formidable scale. A study of the digests of the reports on individual countries in a later section of this volume will dispel any shadow of doubt on that point. Exaggeration and sensationalism in this matter are profoundly to be deprecated, but quite as disastrous in the other direction is deliberate blindness to ascertained facts. The supreme value, indeed, of the League investigation is that it has made ascertained facts available in a field in which reliance had far too largely to be placed on surmise and rumour.

Though the main concern of the League and of the investigators themselves was necessarily with the traffic in women and children from one country to another, it was impossible to pursue enquiries into that without at the same time studying in some detail the whole question of prostitution in each individual country. There is no small incidental value in that, for to break windows and let in light means giving public opinion the world over an opportunity of expressing itself on such abuses as

it now discovers. It is quite true that there are limits to the effect public opinion in one country can have on evils in another. Undue external criticism may sometimes only inflame feeling. But after all there exists to-day, as there did not ten years ago, an international forum, and it has been shown again and again at Geneva that no man is prepared to mount the Assembly platform in the eyes of the world and attempt to defend the indefensible. Even a Latin-American State cannot be wholly insensible to what men and women in Great Britain, or Germany, or Canada, are saying of the conditions it permits to exist within its borders. Sooner or later it will become convinced that the conditions must be changed. That has, in fact, been demonstrated already by the action certain States have hastened to take, and by the anxiety others have displayed to present their country in a better light than the investigators have done.

The White Slave Traffic, it has been said, exists. As a matter of convenience and familiarity it will almost inevitably continue to be called by that name, although it obscures the fact that women of brown and black and yellow races are involved in it, and though the use of this particular terminology has the unhappy effect in other continents of

suggesting that women of the white races are more ready than others to lend themselves to the form of degradation the words denote. The League of Nations itself has officially dropped the adjective altogether, and speaks only of the "traffic in women and children."

If the traffic exists, that means that there exist also not merely its victims but its organisers—men and women who live on the degradation of others not for the gratification of their own passions but for financial profit. That, as the investigators themselves and the Experts' Committee before whom their disclosures were first laid have emphasised again and again, is the root of the whole evil.

If the "third party," who organises and fosters the traffic for his personal gain, could be eliminated, the traffic itself would wither up and disappear in a twelvemonth, for the women themselves have neither the knowledge, the initiative nor the money to transfer themselves systematically from one country to another—certainly not from Europe to America—even if they had the desire.

The reports of the investigators on the different countries cannot be appreciated unless the part played by the different parties financially interested

in the traffic is understood. The report itself contains a clear definition :—

> " Among the traffickers there are, broadly speaking, four types which specially stand out.
>
> " First, the important individuals who, for the sake of a convenient label may be called ' principals,' and who are generally the owners of brothels ;
>
> " Secondly, the ' mesdames ' who manage brothels ;
>
> " Thirdly, the ' souteneurs ' who live on the earnings of one or more girls ; and
>
> " Fourthly, the intermediaries who sometimes secure and transport the girl for the ' souteneurs ' and ' mesdames.'
>
> " These four types often play into each others' hands. Associated with them are various other disreputable characters of the underworld who are willing to concern themselves in any fraud or villainy which offers them a chance of making a dishonest livelihood."

But here again exaggeration must be avoided. There is no clear evidence of an organised international mechanism maintained by the traffickers. They work pretty much independently, though

there has grown up a certain camaraderie, and rings of souteneurs in one country are in loose touch with rings in another. They have their lingua franca; they have certain recognised places of resort in different capitals ; but sensational descriptions of anything like a world-wide traffickers' organisation must be discounted.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

ARTICLE 1.—The High Contracting Parties agree that, in the event of their not being already Parties to the Agreement of May 18th, 1904, and the Convention of May 4th, 1910, they will transmit with the least possible delay their ratifications of, or adhesions to, those instruments in the manner laid down therein.

ARTICLE 2.—The High Contracting Parties agree to take all measures to discover and prosecute persons who are engaged in the traffic in children of both sexes and who commit offences within the meaning of Article 1 of the Convention of May 4th, 1910.

ARTICLE 3.—The High Contracting Parties agree to take the necessary steps to secure the

punishment of attempts to commit, and, within legal limits, of acts preparatory to the commission of, the offences specified in Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention of May 4th, 1910.

Article 4.—The High Contracting Parties agree that in cases where there are no extradition Conventions in force between them, they will take all measures within their power to extradite or provide for the extradition of persons accused or convicted of the offences specified in Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention of May 4th, 1910.

Article 5.—In paragraph B of the final Protocol of the Convention of 1910, the words " twenty completed years of age " shall be replaced by the words " twenty-one completed years of age."

Article 6.—The High Contracting Parties agree in case they have not already taken legislative or administrative measures regarding licensing and supervision of employment agencies and offices, to prescribe such regulations as are required to ensure the protection of women and children seeking employment in another country.

Article 7.—The High Contracting Parties undertake in connection with immigration and emigration to adopt such administrative and legislative measures as are required to check the traffic

in women and children. In particular, they undertake to make such regulations as are required for the protection of women and children travelling on emigrant ships, not only at the points of departure and arrival, but also during the journey, and to arrange for the exhibition in railway stations and in ports of notices warning women and children of the danger of the traffic, and indicating the places where they can obtain accommodation and assistance.

CHAPTER IV

HOW THE TRAFFIC WORKS

The next section of this volume gives detailed pictures of the White Slave Traffic in operation as seen through the eyes of the League's investigators as they pursued their enquiries on the spot in 28 different countries. It may be convenient here to summarise briefly the conclusions emerging as to the nature of the traffic and the conditions under which it flourishes, leaving to a later section the still more important question of the methods by which the evil can be most effectively combated.

The traffic in women incontestably exists largely because, in many countries, foreign women are in greater demand than natives of the country for the very reason that they are foreign. In Latin-America, for example, there is a certain novelty and a certain distinction about a French woman in particular. The demand comes, of course, ultimately from the individual man, but there must be some kind of organisation to supply it. The recognised vice districts and the official licensed houses of

prostitution constitute that organisation. Without one or other of those two systems the traffic would vanish, for the girl who travels to a distant country and has to carry on her profession simply by solicitation in the streets or in cafés cannot earn nearly enough to satisfy the requirements of the man who is exploiting her for profit.

For profit, it must be repeated, is at the root of the whole business. It is the belief that she will earn more for herself that leads the professional prostitute to emigrate from Paris or Warsaw or Berlin to Buenos Ayres, and it is the prospect of profit that perpetuates the existence of the souteneur, who can afford to take expensive journeys from South America to Eastern Europe and pay the passage-money of girls from there to America again, knowing that in a licensed house in Buenos Ayres or Rio de Janeiro or Montevideo the girl will earn enough to reimburse him for his outlay with a substantial margin to spare.

Who are the women thus procured? To a large extent they are, as has been said already, professional prostitutes. There is little evidence of completely innocent girls being seduced and transported in the course of the traffic, though an exception must be made of the fairly numerous cases of girls who contract legal or fictitious

marriages with souteneurs, discovering too late that this is merely an expedient to facilitate travel, and that on arrival at their destination their business is to practise prostitution for the benefit of the man they have travelled with.

Not quite decisively distinguished from this category are the girls who take engagements abroad as artistes or singers. In some cases of this kind it is quite clearly understood by all concerned that the girl who spends her evening as a singer or waitress in a cabaret is expected to render other services to customers at a later hour. So completely is this taken for granted that, as will be observed in the report on Greece for example, women working in the lower-class cafés and cabarets have to undergo a regular medical examination as prostitutes as a matter of course—a fact usually discovered by the girl for the first time when she has reached her destination and is taking up her work.

In other cases, however, the engagements in concert companies or theatrical troupes are genuine on the girls' side at any rate, but either the whole concern comes financially to grief while touring abroad or individual girls under the stress of low pay or the improvidence characteristic of women of that type, yield to the temptation of adopting the

more lucrative profession of prostitute in some foreign town which the troupe is visiting. In Cuba, for example, a madame observed that she never had to go out of her way to recruit girls, as there were always variety shows passing through, and a girl encountered at Havre told how she had been a member of a theatrical company whose manager absconded at Alexandria, whereupon all the company, including fifteen girls under age, took to prostitution in Egypt for a livelihood.

One other class of too ready recruits is composed of girls who, without being professional prostitutes, practise prostitution from time to time, either to supplement inadequate earnings or from a general absence of moral standards which leads them without much hesitation or reluctance to give satisfaction to any man who will treat them to a new dress or merely to an evening's entertainment. Instances of this kind are numerous enough in centres as different as Liverpool, Paris and Bucharest, and references will be found to them in the reports on those cities. This type of girl can be easily persuaded to go abroad to some country where life is represented as easy and the profession lucrative.

Broadly speaking, the younger the girl the greater the demand for her. On the other hand,

in most countries greater risks attach to attempts to take minors out or bring them in for purposes of prostitution, and while in almost every country plenty of such girls are to be found in licensed houses—where licensed houses exist—they do not figure so conspicuously in the disclosures regarding the actual international traffic. A word should perhaps be added on the bearing of economic factors on the traffic. Low wages in their daily occupation do not directly drive girls abroad, but, as has already been shown, they do, in some cases, drive them into prostitution in their own country, and the adoption of that manner of life places them in the class from which girls for the export traffic are habitually obtained.

As to the countries of export and import, certain general conclusions emerge. No doubt individual cases could be found of traffic from almost any individual country to any other, but there are certain recognised "traffic routes" of predominant importance. The lines run from Europe to Latin-America and North Africa, and in particular from France, Poland and Roumania to Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay in the one hemisphere and to Egypt in the other. Travel arrangements are not always simple, especially where emigration and immigration laws are effectively administered, but

the souteneurs have developed their methods systematically, and by the expedient either of forged documents, sham marriages or fictitious offers of employment, or by any combination of these methods, they can usually transport the girls they have recruited from any starting-point to any destination.

It may be asked finally why this particular development of the business of prostitution should call for stronger reprobation and more resolute opposition than prostitution as normally practised. The answer is threefold. In the first place, while prostitution as a business is repellent enough when only two parties are concerned, it is much more so when the commercial side is so far developed as to provide a comfortable livelihood for some third party, who does nothing but furnish a supply to meet the demand, and by so doing stimulates the demand indirectly. In the second place, the international traffic spells more certain and complete demoralisation for the victims themselves than ordinary prostitution, for a girl stranded in a foreign country, with whose customs she is unfamiliar, whose language she in all likelihood does not speak, and where she has no friend to turn to in case of need, finds herself far more hopelessly dependent on her exploiters than a woman practis-

ing prostitution at home. Thirdly, it is unhappily a fact, though one on which there is no temptation to dwell unduly, that in some of the countries to which there is the largest export traffic, girls are habitually familiarised with lower depths of degradation than the ordinary prostitute in a European country experiences. That is the justification—if any justification be needed—for the war declared by the League of Nations on the international traffic in women.

Part II

A DETAILED INVESTIGATION

CHAPTER V

WESTERN EUROPE

The six countries investigated in Western Europe display characteristics so different in regard to prostitution and the traffic in girls that no general statements will cover them all. The group includes Great Britain, where conditions are on the whole as good as can be found anywhere, and Portugal, where they are as bad. Perhaps the most notable feature about Great Britain is the effectiveness of the law against men who live on women's earnings. In Portugal a dark feature is the number of children of sixteen or less officially registered as prostitutes, and the evidence of laxity of administration is too convincing to be dismissed. Holland, where the licensed houses have been abolished, has not succeeded in eliminating some of the least satisfactory features of prostitution, which appears to be carried on with particular blatancy in towns like Amsterdam and Rotterdam. In Belgium similarly, ordinary prostitutes meet with no interference on the part of the police, but

their earnings in this country appear to be abnormally low. France is the great export country of Western Europe, as is evidenced by the number of French girls found in licensed houses all over South America. In Spain, finally, the authorities exercise rather surprisingly rigorous control over public morals, and watch night clubs and other centres of clandestine prostitution with considerable vigilance. There is, however, a fairly considerable export traffic both from and through Spain.

Great Britain

There is, of course, no State regulation of prostitution in Great Britain to-day. That, however, was not always the case. In 1864 a Contagious Diseases Act was passed, providing for the compulsory medical examination of prostitutes in eleven garrison towns in England and Ireland. Various other centres were subsequently added, the number ultimately reaching eighteen. This fact is worth recalling, because the public agitation (connected particularly with the name of Josephine Butler) against these Acts had its effects in other countries besides Great Britain, the more so since the contention of the abolitionists that the system

promoted national and international traffic in women so far impressed the Government that they ordered an official inquiry into the allegation. The report resulting declared it to be

"a fact established beyond all doubt that for many years a trade or traffic has been carried on whereby a very large number of English girls—many if not most of them under the age of 21 years—have been enlisted to become inmates of brothels in Continental cities in consideration of fees or commissions paid by the keepers of the houses to the persons procuring the girls."

This chapter of the history of prostitution in Great Britain must be borne in mind when the very different situation existing to-day is examined. The Contagious Diseases Acts were finally abolished in 1886, and stern measures against the procurers of girls for immoral purposes had been embodied a year earlier in the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885. This important piece of legislation, completed by subsequent measures in 1913 and 1922, is the basis of police action against souteneurs in Great Britain to-day.

Apart from its stringent provisions against any person procuring a woman for any third person's gratification, it contains two clauses which throw

a sinister light on some of the methods employed by the organisers of commercialised vice. By the first it is declared a misdemeanour to " apply, administer to, or cause to be taken by any woman or girl any drug, matter or thing, with intent to stupefy or overpower " so as to enable any person to have immoral relations with her. The second declares it equally a misdemeanour to detain a girl or woman against her will in a brothel, and lays it down that it shall be considered to be detention within the meaning of the Act to " withhold from such woman or girl any wearing apparel or other property belonging to her, or, where wearing apparel has been lent or otherwise supplied to such woman or girl, to threaten such woman or girl with legal proceedings if she takes away with her the wearing apparel so lent or supplied." It is added that no legal proceedings will lie against a woman taking away under such conditions such wearing apparel as may be necessary to enable her to escape.

The State Regulation of the seventies and eighties is now a thing of the past in Great Britain, but the Act of 1885 is far from having outlived its usefulness. It is indeed because it was wisely drafted and is being effectively administered that the League investigators were able to give so

relatively satisfactory an account of conditions in England to-day. The sources of their information included official documents and conversations with Home Office and police officials, representatives of charitable societies, souteneurs and prostitutes. England alone was studied, but the opinion is expressed that the conclusions reached apply broadly to Wales, Scotland and Ireland as well. The enquiry was pursued principally in London and Liverpool, though Hull and Southampton were also visited.

In the absence of official regulation, foreign prostitutes are usually only detected when they bring themselves within the scope of the law by such an offence as annoying by solicitation. Statistics show a steady and considerable diminution in the proceedings taken against procurers and souteneurs, and also in those against keepers of disorderly houses. The best testimony to the comparatively satisfactory conditions prevailing is that of the souteneurs and prostitutes themselves. " Things in London are tough," one of them complained. " All the girls here are on the streets. Keep under cover or you are liable to get knocked off. The police aren't very fond of boys (souteneurs) here." Earnings, moreover, are bad. " Here a girl can hardly make enough to keep herself.

Take mine, for instance. If I didn't run a game I'd fall flat. All the boys here have a side-graft. You have got to have it. Why, a girl walks the streets all night, and comes back with only twenty bob."

The same stories come from Liverpool. The prostitutes there are mostly to be found in the public-houses just before closing-time, and they take their clients off to furnished rooms or fifth-rate hotels. Few of the girls in Liverpool, however, are professionals. Most of them take to the life simply to supplement the money they make at their regular trade. Many are married women. Of this class it is said that they are not really out for money, and that they are much more anxious for their men friends to offer them " another glass " than to go home with them. It is added, rather curiously, that besides this type of prostitute there is a certain number of girls who do not ask for money, and who frequent the public-houses or wander in the streets at night. Many of them, it is said, are to be found at a certain resort referred to as 42 X, and it is remarked that " you can get on terms with them by asking them to dance with you."

As for anything in the nature of a definite " white slave traffic," the investigators rate it at

very small dimensions, if indeed it exists at all. The principal investigator encountered only one foreign prostitute anywhere. She was a Roumanian who said she had been in London and had come there direct from her own country. She was about 30 years of age, and when asked whether she would like to "couple up with a good boy and go to a country where money could be made," she accepted the proposal eagerly. The strict control of immigration, much simplified, of course, by the fact that all entry must be by sea, and the operation of the Aliens' Act, go far to protect the country against any influx of foreign prostitutes. Nine such were expelled in 1922, five of these being French and the remainder Belgian, Russian, Lithuanian and Polish. Five who were expelled in 1923 were all French. A certain amount of trouble is caused, as is now generally known, by the willingness of men of a certain type to go through the form of marriage with a foreign woman so as to give her British nationality and prevent her expulsion as an alien, the man disappearing as soon as he is outside the registry-office door.

There is equally little evidence of any export traffic, though foreign prostitutes no doubt pass through England occasionally among other transmigrants. The best proof of that is that the invest-

igators have come on hardly any English prostitutes in foreign countries. There are, it is true, a certain number in the United States, but there they figure under the heading " Great Britain and Colonies," so that no precise inference can be drawn as to their origin. A good many girls, it is stated, would be glad to get out of England to more remunerative centres, but they have not the funds for the journey. But the general view of souteneurs and madames is that English girls are too independent to do really well as prostitutes, and their unwillingness to lend themselves to perverse practices detracts considerably from their commercial value. That, no doubt, is why souteneurs decline to put up the necessary money for their passage to South America or elsewhere.

The principal reason, however, for the immunity of Great Britain from the evils of the traffic in women is the stringency of the law against souteneurs, though a few of this class were encountered in London. The vigour with which the law against living on a woman's immoral earnings is administered makes London and other British cities extremely unhealthy for the souteneur type, as their own frank admissions emphasise. The relatively strict check kept on the issue of passports, and the fact that special permission has to

be obtained from a police magistrate before a child of under 16 can be taken out of the country to take part in any public performance for gain, are additional barriers in the way of the trafficker, and barriers sufficient as a rule to deter him from his endeavours. It is mentioned, incidentally, that the good work done by the Cardew Hostel for English chorus-girls and others in Paris has the effect of protecting girls of this type performing in the French capital from temptations that might otherwise prove disastrous to some of them.

Figures supplied by the British Government in their comments on the report show that persons proceeded against in England and Wales for offences concerned with prostitution—mainly no doubt solicitation—averaged 5,750 a year for the ten years 1914–1923. In 1914 there were 9,853 cases, and in 1915 6,965. The number then ranged pretty steadily between 5,000 and 6,000 a year from 1916 to 1922, with a sharp and unexplained drop to 2,410 in 1923. It would be unwise to draw any very definite conclusions from these statistics, since the variations may be due to changes in police methods in different localities as much as to an actual rise or fall in the volume of prostitution.

Holland.

Holland is in most things a well-regulated country, and all the evidence is that it has got the traffic in women and children well in hand. At the same time well-marked transit routes run across the country, and passage of the frontier is easy. There are, therefore, a number of foreign prostitutes in Holland. That, however, does not argue a systematised traffic.

Ordinary prostitution is another matter. There is no official regulation, and prostitutes are allowed to exercise their profession freely, but with the limitation that they must not solicit in the streets or at windows. That prohibition appears to be completely ignored, for the report regarding Amsterdam (for example) is to the effect that the women usually occupy ground-floor rooms, and both by day and night they may be seen behind the window-curtains trying to attract the attention of passers-by by tapping on the pane and making signs. There is a great deal of solicitation in the streets, and it is mentioned of Rotterdam, in particular, that the women display a brazen persistence in their methods. There are, however, few foreign women to be encountered, with the

possible exception of some Germans. The women themselves say that if they are stopped by the police for some breach of regulation they are not arrested. The police merely take their names and addresses, and it is perfectly easy to give false ones. Though licensed houses have been abolished recognised houses of prostitution notoriously exist in Rotterdam, passers-by being invited to enter in full view of the police.

The Netherlands Government, in its comments on the report, points out that there are four different kinds of establishments in which prostitution is practised or furthered : (1) hotels at which a man and woman stay together ; (2) houses in which prostitutes live alone ; (3) clandestine brothels ; (4) houses used as meeting-places. This classification would apply to many or most other countries.

Statements made by a madame at Amsterdam give a clear general picture of the conditions under which prostitution is carried on in Holland. " I employ three women here," she said, " but at night I sometimes have ten or a dozen. The three I employ regularly live here. If a stranger wants to come and live with me I am quite ready to take her. In Holland everything's controlled by the police. This house and all the others are supposed to take

in casual lodgers. In those cases the women pay me for their board and lodging, and every customer they receive must pay for the room. They sell drinks and take a third of the profits on that."

Isolated cases of traffic within the country are brought to light. In one instance a commercial traveller induced two girls from the provinces to accept an engagement in a town at a distance. Both were under 20. When they got there they found they were to work in a café and not merely persuade customers to drink but lend themselves to prostitution. Fortunately they had the good sense to go straight to the police-station, with the result that the original procurer was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment.

Traffic from abroad so far as it exists is mainly concerned with German girls, the similarity of the language making it easy for them to pass themselves off as Dutch. One case may be taken as example. A certain Dutch subject described as S. arrived in Germany in 1922 and there married a German girl of 19, whom he brought back to Holland and compelled to practice prostitution in several Dutch towns. In November of the same year he went with his wife to a town close to the German frontier and she took the opportunity to

escape and tell her story to the German police. S., who had followed her, was arrested and condemned as a souteneur-trafficker. In this case the German and Dutch police collaborated, and when the offender had served his sentence in Germany he was handed over to the Dutch authorities to be charged there.

It has already been mentioned that not many foreign women were met with in Holland. That may be due partly to the Government's practice of expelling all foreign prostitutes found on Dutch soil. On the other hand, owing to the fact that an expelled person incurs no penalty by returning, a certain number of these women do get back into Holland. Some of them go through the ceremony of marriage with a Dutchman, either making him a monthly allowance or paying him a lump sum for his services in thus enabling them to acquire Dutch citizenship. The Government, in its official reply to the League, was quite clear that the licensed houses when they existed definitely stimulated the traffic by providing a " market " for girls brought in by procurers or souteneurs. It is added that while the houses existed they never had any difficulty in securing children of tender years from abroad.

In spite of the official restrictions there is evi-

dence that a limited amount of inward traffic does exist, and here, as elsewhere, conversation with souteneurs and prostitutes leads to rather different conclusions from the official assurances. At Rotterdam the investigator was told that foreign women—French, Belgian and German—could pursue their calling with little interference. At Amsterdam it appears to be different, a madame explaining that though there was no official inscription of prostitutes the police had a list of everyone known to be practising prostitution, and that though there was no compulsory medical inspection it was understood that every girl would be examined about once a week in the house where she lived.

The general conclusion of the investigators is that the inward traffic in Holland amounts to little. As to outward traffic, passports are obtained without difficulty and would not be withheld merely because the applicant was a souteneur or a prostitute. The fact that three countries adjacent to Holland—Belgium, Germany and Luxemburg—regularly expel foreign prostitutes, and that very few Dutch women are found among those so expelled, suggests that no traffic on any considerable scale to those countries, which are the most accessible, can exist.

Belgium.

In Belgium the control of prostitution is in the hands not of the central government but of the different communes. Prostitutes naturally congregate mainly in the large cities of Brussels and Antwerp. While they appear to be little interfered with, their earnings are extremely small, the usual fee ranging from 40 francs downwards, and a franc is to-day worth less than 1½d. Licensed houses exist in Brussels, but in Antwerp they were suppressed in 1925. Registration and medical inspection had been suspended for an experimental period of six months just about the time of the investigation. No minors were found in the authorised establishments. Clandestine prostitution abounds, extensive use being made of small hotels in the neighbourhood of the railway stations. At Antwerp considerable business is done by girls who are ostensibly barmaids, but in reality prostitutes, and who serve in the bars and café-chantants, and have rooms upstairs to which they take their clients. The police claim to be unable to secure sufficient evidence to suppress this practice.

The police, indeed, appear to allow prostitutes plenty of licence, for it is reported that at some of the houses women post themselves on their door-

steps and openly solicit passers-by from that point of vantage. Some houses are run by two owners, one of whom solicits at the door while the other looks after business inside. As evidence of the demoralising influence of the licensed houses it is mentioned that in one of them, where particularly degrading exhibitions were taking place, it was clear that one of the inmates had never witnessed that form of vice before, and was being initiated into it for the first time.

In some of the dancing establishments the girls appear to play a rather equivocal part. They are paid very little, have to buy their supper on the premises, and to give certain tips to some of the employees, so that they only pocket for themselves anything the customers may bestow on them. It was difficult, however, to get any general admission from them that they went home with customers after closing time, though on being pressed they did acknowledge that they occasionally went home with a friend.

Little check is kept in Belgium on the entry of foreign prostitutes, and it is therefore difficult to estimate the extent of the inward and outward movement. A certain number of foreign prostitutes are expelled from the country from time to time, but unless the expulsion is by royal decree

they render themselves liable to no penalty if they return. French girls in particular can cross the frontier at will, and there is no discrimination against foreign prostitutes as such. At Antwerp, which is a seaport, foreign prostitutes are more numerous than in Brussels.

The kind of case that does from time to time crop up is illustrated by information secured from a tavern-keeper, who spoke of two American girls who had worked for him in the previous month. "They have gone back to America," he said; "I let them work here and they came when they pleased like the others." Asked why an American girl should choose that town he answered, "I think they were artistes who got hard up and had to find money to get away with." He added that they could have made plenty of money if they had been able to stay, explaining that by "being able" he meant if the police had allowed it; in Belgium all prostitutes were under supervision, and no woman could ply the trade unless she was a Belgian. That regulation, it is clear, is freely broken.

Just as foreign prostitutes can enter Belgium without difficulty, so Belgian women can cross the frontier freely so far as exit from Belgium is concerned. A number do, in fact, pass into France, Germany and Holland. With earnings so

low as they are it is not surprising that Belgian prostitutes should be anxious to try their fortunes elsewhere. And so they appear to be. A café proprietor told the investigator that "there are lots of girls here who'd like to get somewhere where there's money to be earned, but they all have friends (souteneurs) and can't easily give them the slip." A couple of souteneurs with whom he established friendly relations told the investigator that several of their friends had taken prostitutes to South Africa and the BelgianCongo, while another mentioned that he was meaning to take his girl, whom he had picked up in a Liège teashop and placed in a house in Brussels, to Mexico.

But the export traffic on the whole amounts to little, and there are fewer souteneurs in Belgium than might have been expected, largely because the poor scale of pay prevailing makes it hard for a girl to earn a living for two.

France.

The investigation in France was carried on with unusual thoroughness, thanks in part to the fact that one of the investigators was furnished with valuable letters of introduction from traffickers in

South America to souteneurs, traffickers and prostitutes in Paris and other French cities. Convincing evidence was obtained of the existence of an organised and relatively extensive traffic between France and various foreign countries.

Licensed houses, registration and medical examination, are under the control of the different municipalities, but their regulations have to be submitted to the Minister of the Interior, and a certain degree of uniformity is thereby assured. Between four and five thousand prostitutes are registered in Paris, but clandestine prostitution exists on a large scale, estimates as to actual numbers (for Paris) differing widely between 25,000 and 50,000. (Clandestines are usually reckoned as about six times the number of registered prostitutes.) As a general rule minors cannot be registered, but large numbers of them are found in the ranks of the clandestine prostitutes, some being less than sixteen years of age. Inmates of licensed houses must be of French nationality and over 21.

Souteneurs are numerous, and appear to be little interfered with by the police—probably because it is not a legal offence merely to live on a woman's immoral earnings—but in many cases there exists between them and the girls a relationship a little different from anything found else-

where, for the girls who frequent the smaller cafés and bars are not professional prostitutes in the ordinary sense of the term. They are, of course, light of morals, but there is not quite the sordidness of systematic prostitution about this arrestingly human picture drawn by a Paris souteneur of the girls of this class :

" You find some fine girls in these places. That's where I got mine. They're not old hands. Generally they are working. Some of them have sweethearts. They are not prostitutes, they give themselves for nothing. The kid I've got now is only 19. She's never taken a sou for it. Most of them are a long way from home. They come from small towns. They don't earn much. If you give them clothes and get them fond of you they go out and bring you a lot of money. These kids can't get on by themselves. They let themselves be persuaded by the men who come to this café, and they never get a franc for it. Mine used to do just the same. She isn't a Parisian. She comes from the north. You should see her embroider. She has a regular trade, but it doesn't bring her in enough."

There is not much evidence of any systematic traffic in France, though there is a good deal of transit traffic and a still more considerable export

of girls of French origin. Among foreign prostitutes in France Italians and Belgians largely predominate, which is natural enough, since these two countries actually adjoin French territory. It should be pointed out that since 1925 the admission of foreign women into licensed houses has been prohibited, a measure which has no doubt resulted for the moment in an increase of foreign prostitutes on the streets. There is no legislation providing for the exclusion or expulsion of foreign prostitutes from France. All foreigners remaining more than two months now require an identity card, but the forgery of these documents has become a flourishing industry, and the fact that immigrants can enter France from all adjoining countries except Germany (and from many others) without a visa removes any serious obstacle to the movements of foreign prostitutes.

The export traffic from France assumes much more formidable proportions than the import or the transit traffic, as the number of French women inscribed in licensed houses in Latin America proves. In Buenos Ayres, for example, for the years 1921–3, the number of French girls inscribed each year was larger than the number of native girls, larger than the number from all other American States put together, and larger than the

number from any other country of Europe. The actual figures for these three years were : French 259, Italian (next in order of numbers) 155. From other South and Central American States similar reports as to the predominance of French women come, with the exception that at Rio de Janeiro Russians are first on the list and French only second.

According to French official reports most of the women who go abroad for the purposes of prostitution are bound for Cuba, Mexico, Panama, Brazil, Uruguay, the Argentine Republic and Spain. Most of these go separately, no cases of the embarcation of whole groups being detected. Usually when a souteneur has secured two or three women he will get their tickets and will himself travel by the same train or boat, but often in a different class and usually without giving any sign of acquaintance with them till they reach their destination. The French authorities claim that the strictness with which the issue of passports is supervised in the case of women and girls travelling alone is an effective obstacle to the traffic, but the predominance of French girls in Latin American brothels hardly bears this out. Nor do the stories of souteneurs themselves. One of them, for example, mentioned that hardly a ship sails, especi-

ally for South America, without at least three souteneurs and their prostitutes.

This particular individual was frank and instructive. "They insist on rushing off to South America," he said, "as if they thought they were going to pick up gold in the streets. Out of my own house alone I have lost fifteen women in four months. They left me to go off with their souteneurs to South America. They won't stay here. Ask the manager of any house you like, he'll tell you the same story. And things there must be as good as they say they are, for the girls never come back. All the news I get from them is excellent."

All of which goes to show, comment the investigators, that there is an extensive migration of foreign women to other countries for purposes of prostitution, the worst feature of it being that at least 10 per cent. of the women are below the age of 21. That estimate is based on declarations of souteneurs and of prostitutes themselves, and on official returns referring to French prostitutes in foreign countries. Many of the girls, it is added, only partially realise what is in store for them, and some are completely ignorant.

Various expedients are resorted to by the souteneurs to surmount the passport difficulty, the commonest being a real or bogus marriage with the

girl, or a contract of employment of some kind. The danger of the latter practice to girls who sometimes sign a contract in perfect good faith is illustrated by the case of a prostitute (encounted at Havre) who had joined a travelling theatrical troupe at the age of 20. The troupe had made tours in Europe and in Northern Africa, but at Cairo the manager had absconded, and the members of the troupe, fifteen of them minors, took to prostitution for a livelihood.

Falsification of age entries on passports in the case of minors is widely prevalent, and when birth certificates are required forged ones are readily available. One trafficker in Paris said " I can provide souteneurs with any kind of passport, visas, birth certificates, marriage certificates, identity papers," and to support his claim he exhibited British, Polish and Brazilian passports. There are persons who make a living by forging documents of this kind and for this purpose. It does not appear, therefore, that the process of getting girls out of France presents any insuperable difficulties.

Nothing in the report on France is quite as interesting as the French Government's own comments on the report, which are contained in a communication of Sept. 29th, 1927, signed, no

doubt as a mere matter of routine, by M. Briand, Minister of Foreign Affairs. It is couched in a tone of considerable acerbity, and is fortunately brief enough to be quoted *in extenso*.

"With regard to the part of this Report which deals with French territory, the Government has no observation to offer on the information furnished to the Committee of Experts by the qualified French authorities. On the other hand, it must protest strongly against the publication of confidential information which cannot be controlled, most of which seems to have been received by unauthorised agents and not by the members of the Committee themselves—and in any case not in the presence of any qualified French authority—from *souteneurs* or persons of equally dubious morals, to whom they were apparently directed and recommended by South American traffickers. The information thus obtained regarding alleged facts seems to have been very readily accepted by the authors of the Report without any attempt at verification. Being based on these necessarily disconnected data—which seem, moreover, to have been regarded as no less valuable than official information, or even as more valuable—the report con-

veys a general picture which does not in the least represent the truth.

"In order that an accurate idea may be afforded of the details of the enquiry in different countries, the French Government asks that a schedule should be appended to the report showing the time spent by the 'experts themselves' in each of the countries dealt with. It would also be most desirable that the report should contain a survey of the situation in various *cities* where experiments in the abolition of regulation have been tried and have failed, so that the influence of these measures on the extent of the traffic may be judged.

"The French Government must leave to the investigators the whole responsibility for conclusions reached by such methods. It desires that this communication should, in accordance with the Council's decision, be forwarded to the Committee of Experts, in order that the necessary corrections and additions may be made to Part II of the Report before publication."

To these strictures the Body of Experts replies at some length. It is unnecessary to reproduce their arguments here. They consist in the main of a vindication of the methods adopted in the con-

duct of the enquiry, which were of course the same in France as everywhere else. The suggestion that an indication should be given of the time devoted to the enquiry in each country is accepted, and reference to the table in which this information is presented shows that the investigation in France covered more than six months. It is not irrelevant to add that M. Le Luc, the highest French police official concerned with questions of morals, was a member of the Body of Experts and a signatory of the Report.

Spain.

In most Spanish towns licensed houses, as well as registration and medical examination of prostitutes, exist. Women can only be registered if they have completed their twenty-third year. Registration, however, is voluntary, except in the case of clandestine prostitutes, who are officially registered if arrested. No minor was found in an authorised licensed house, though there are many among the clandestine prostitutes. The proprietress of an unauthorised house, for example, sent out for a girl of sixteen who was at work during the day but practised prostitution at night. While it is illegal for men to be proprietors of licensed houses, there are some who are, in reality, pro-

prietors, but entrust the management of the house to their wives.

A good deal of police activity is manifest in various parts of Spain, particularly Barcelona, which a souteneur described as a very dangerous spot, especially for persons trafficking in minors. Co-operation between French and Spanish authorities is found very valuable at Barcelona. A good deal of clandestine prostitution goes on in night-clubs and cabarets, but a singularly rigid decorum has to be observed. Secret police are often present and there must, according to a girl employed in one of these establishments, be no fondling or kissing ; the girls " must sit with their hands folded, as if they were in church." So long as this degree of propriety is observed the police agents appear to be indifferent as to what may follow. What does follow was made quite clear by a girl who discussed these establishments with an investigator. The girls, she said, were regularly employed to dance with anyone who asked them at a wage of 7 pesetas (five shillings) a night. They were not allowed to solicit, but they could go off with a customer if they liked, though in that case they lost their night's pay. " You can understand that 7 pesetas a night doesn't suit the book of this kind of girl, so when we shut down, at 3.30 in the morning, they almost

all go off with a client." Plenty of these girls are minors, and false birth certificates are said to be easy to come by and rarely challenged. Some trace was found of obscene publications, but the police are described as being very strict.

There is unquestionably a considerable movement of prostitutes in and out of Spain, but the Spanish authorities claim that by far the greater part of this represents simply transit traffic, French girls in particular being brought in to be put on shipboard at a Spanish port for some destination in Latin America. Souteneurs themselves have enlarged on that information, one of them stating that to his knowledge a certain number of traffickers went regularly to France to get hold of girls there. They passed themselves off as rich Spaniards and promised the girls every kind of luxury. When they had gained their victims' confidence they persuaded them to come to Barcelona, and there made them engage in prostitution before embarking for some country abroad. Another souteneur said, " I've always got friends passing through here with girls on their way to Mexico or Havana. The girls are always about nine years younger than the age on the passports." Proof was discovered by the police of a regular code used by traffickers in sending telegrams

about girls, as for example " Machine not ready yet," " Am sending you bag you forgot," " Just completing repairs," " Ready very shortly."

In some of the towns there is a considerable number of French and Italian prostitutes, and at one or two border resorts near the French frontier the advent of foreign women, principally French, during the summer season is reported. There is, however, nothing to suggest that this is part of an organised traffic. On the other hand, the activity of both French and Spanish souteneurs on the Mediterranean coast from Marseilles to Barcelona is noted, the aim being in most cases to get girls away through Spain to Central or South America.

It must be observed that the investigators find some discrepancy between the low estimate of the export traffic given by the Spanish authorities and the number of Spanish prostitutes found inscribed in some of the larger centres in South America. It is clear, moreover, that there is no very searching scrutiny of persons leaving Spanish ports, least of all if they are foreigners. One madame in Madrid mentioned that she had sent two of her girls to Montevideo (Uruguay) to oblige a friend there, and got back not only the passage money but a commission for her trouble.

Portugal.

This inconsiderable country comes badly out of the enquiry. There are certain particularly repulsive features about prostitution as practised in Portugal, notably the frequency with which parents deliberately place their daughters, often at a very early age, in licensed houses, the girls being expected to send the bulk of their earnings home. A conversation recorded by the investigator is instructive. "Portugal," observed a madame, "is the only country I know where a girl of 14 can enter a licensed house. I have two girls myself who aren't 19 yet, and they have been here for four or five years now." "But don't the parents interfere?" the investigator asked. "Not a bit. It's the parents who brought them to me. The girls send home all the money they make." This was confirmed by a French girl who had practised prostitution in several countries, and who said in Lisbon that "it is often the girls' relatives who take them to the madames and put them in the houses at 14."

According to the police lists there were in 1924 in Lisbon 4,263 registered prostitutes, of whom 552 were Spanish and 299 French. The number of other foreigners was negligible. Out of the

total number registered in Portugal, 1,721 were between 16 and 21 years of age, and to these must apparently be added a certain number of children even under 16 who were registered because they were found to be practising prostitution already.

It is clear that the police in Portugal interfere very little with prostitutes and the madames keep the girls under their thumb by running them into debt, instigating them to buy all kinds of things and even lending them money to obtain cocaine. Lisbon is an international centre for the manufacture and distribution of obscene photographs.

While the proportion of foreign prostitutes in Portugal is very high—about 25 per cent. in Lisbon in 1924—it was stated that the inward flow had almost stopped owing to the depreciation of Portuguese currency. The demand for foreign girls continued, but it was not being satisfied. Such girls merely made Lisbon a port of call on their way to South America. At the same time, stories were told of a madame, with houses at Oporto and Seville as well as Lisbon, who regularly boarded boats with a view to getting hold of girls. One of her victims threw a good deal of light on the method pursued. She had, she said, been left stranded at Buenos Ayres by an opera company to which she belonged, and had then begun to prac-

tise prostitution at Buenos Ayres, Montevideo and Rio de Janeiro. When she got to Lisbon she found some difficulty in getting hold of her luggage and a woman who had come on board at Lisbon offered to help her and succeeded in securing the missing trunks. This woman invited the girl to come and see her, and then persuaded her to practise prostitution in her house. The girl went on, " I arrived here without a friend. I had five trunks, which were all stolen, and this woman offered to speak to the police about it. She has evidently got an understanding with them, for in next to no time she got my luggage back. I have stayed with her ever since. I owe her several hundred crowns. She has kept all my clothes and my jewels as pledges."

Another of these sombre stories of unhappy pilgrimages from country to country was told by a Spanish girl, referred to as T.G.G. She said she was born in Spain in 1897 and lived from 1916 to 1920 at Nice in the house of The Good Shepherd (a rescue home). Then she encountered a man named M.L., who put her in a house of prostitution. In February, 1923, they moved to Barcelona, where the girl solicited in the streets. The man, who had another girl working for him, used to beat her and take her money from her. In April

he was arrested and expelled from Spain, whereupon he took the girl on to Lisbon and put her in a house there. As he continued to maltreat her, she left him and threatened to complain to the police. After that he left her alone, and she lost sight of him.

Fairly elaborate regulations regarding foreign prostitutes exist, but they are very slackly administered, and the investigators found the police singularly devoid of information on such matters as the expulsion of foreign women. They professed to have no knowledge of any case of traffic in girls. Similar slackness prevails in regard to the issue of passports. A souteneur, for instance, volunteered the information that " a prostitute is supposed not to be able to leave the country, but I know five or six girls, all of them young, who have got passports. It's easier for them to get passports than to get money for the journey." Another added : " The police issue passports to anyone over 18. For girls under 18 it may cost a few shillings, but they get them all right."

While Portugal does not appear to be an important centre of any organised traffic, the investigators point to the evils arising from the fact that girls are registered as prostitutes as early as 16, and even younger if they have been already practising pros-

titution before that age. It is suggested that some local authorities actually co-operate with procurers by registering young girls on the plea, no doubt well-founded, that they were already living as prostitutes.

CHAPTER VI

CENTRAL EUROPE

The six Central European States investigated exhibit no characteristics of special importance. In all of them traces of the traffic were found, but in none of them was it of very considerable volume. Ordinary prostitution is reported on a considerable scale in Hamburg, which is one of the regular ports of embarkation for traffickers and their victims for South America, and Berlin achieves an evil distinction as a centre for the production and distribution of indecent photographs. The report on Germany, moreover, lays special stress on the dangers besetting girls who accept the usual type of entertainment engagement abroad.

Austria, when visited by the investigators, had lately abandoned the regulation system, and the women had hardly adjusted themselves to the new conditions. Daylight prostitution was curiously prevalent in Vienna. In Hungary the economic condition of the country and the depreciation of the

currency had made the prostitute's life a hard one, and many girls were in debt to the madames. For the same reason souteneurs were almost non-existent, and no foreign women were coming into the country.

Regarding Switzerland there is nothing to note, but Italy is of special interest by reason of the high degree of organisation achieved through a system under which girls are moved on about once a fortnight from one town to another through the intermediary of agents who claim that they can always put their hands at any moment on an individual girl.

Germany.

Germany is among the countries where a serious attempt is made by the police authorities to keep prostitution in check and suppress the international traffic altogether. German Governments have signed and ratified all the three principal international agreements (those of 1904, 1910 and 1921) on the subject.

Conditions in different German cities vary. In Hamburg, for example, or rather in one suburb of Hamburg, Altona, licensed houses of prostitution existed at the time of the investigators' visit, but it was announced at the League of Nations

Assembly in 1927 that the licensed house system would be abolished throughout Germany as from October 1st in that year, except in the area of the Allied troops of occupation.* In both Hamburg and Berlin individual prostitutes are registered and required to undergo medical examination. At Altona the " red-light " quarter consisted of two streets in the form of an L, with iron gates at each end. It was open from 7 in the evening to 6 in the morning, and theoretically, but only theoretically, closed by day. These two streets included about fifty houses, and each house sheltered four or five girls—all whom the investigators saw being about twenty-five or over—who solicited from the doorways. Similar streets, not specially designated, existed in other quarters of Hamburg, and stress is laid on the insistence of the invitations extended to passers-by by the inmates from their windows or doorsteps.

In Berlin, where the registered prostitutes number 6,000, the unregistered are estimated at 12,000, and though there are no licensed houses it is observed that the flats of ill-fame

* In its comments on the Report the German Government stated it was in negotiation with the French High Commissioner at Coblenz regarding the suppression of the licensed houses " established by order of the occupation authorities in the Rhineland zone under French occupation."

which abound in many quarters of the city serve substantially the same purpose, for a proprietress who keeps discreetly in the background runs the girls whom she lodges, pocketing 50 per cent of their earnings, and the girls themselves solicit openly from the windows. Some of them are as young as 16. Both in Hamburg and Berlin there are cafés of varying degrees of disrepute which serve as recognised places of rendezvous for prostitutes and souteneurs. One sinister development appears to be peculiar to Berlin. That is the manufacture of indecent and suggestive photographs, which are bought by prostitutes to stimulate the emotions of their clients, principally—so the investigators (themselves Americans) observe—"British and American tourists."

One glimpse of that particular depth in the underworld will suffice. It is supplied by a description of one notorious character engaged in the business. The words are those of a communicative souteneur with whom the investigators struck acquaintance. "He's got all sorts of lines. He sells cocaine to the girls. He poses himself for these pictures. He's got two women of his own on the streets. His partner is an amateur photographer. X gets the people to pose, and his

partner takes the photos and makes the prints. X supplies everyone round here with pictures." There seems to be no difficulty in getting girls to pose, for a consideration.

Frankfort-on-Main is said to be another centre for the manufacture of such pictures. It appears, however, to be a risky business, for the police are constantly on the alert, and as a measure of precaution the photographer usually acts through one or more intermediaries instead of selling his prints direct to the ultimate purchaser.

With regard to the traffic itself, Germany is in a position of special difficulty owing to the length of her land frontiers and the number of countries—no fewer than 10—which she actually adjoins. Nevertheless it is more as a country of transit than of import or export that Germany is concerned in the traffic. There are, of course, a number of women among the prostitutes registered and unregistered, but most of these have drifted in casually and voluntarily, and many of them have been long in Germany. Most cases of the actual introduction of foreigners into the country for purposes of prostitution concern Polish women.

One such case quoted by the investigators illustrates the methods adopted by the purveyors. A Lodz girl met in that city a man called M.F. She

got engaged to him, and he shortly afterwards crossed into Germany without a passport. For the equivalent of £10 M.F.'s father arranged to smuggle the girl, together with three other girls and a young man, into Germany, getting them across the frontier through the fields at night. In a German city she met M.F., and went with him to a Rabbi's house to be married. The Rabbi was away, but they persuaded his wife to perform the ceremony according to the Jewish ritual, which having been done she informed the pair that they were married. The girl lived three days with her husband. Then he began to beat her, and finally turned her out of doors, saying she was not his wife. He conceded, however, that she might go on living with him if she would go on the streets and bring him back her earnings. She refused, and complained to the Jewish authorities—with what result is not told.

The police find little difference in character or volume between the pre-war and the post-war traffic, and they claim that there has never been very much of either. There are indications of a small but more or less systematic flow of German women to the Balkans, and a rather more marked, though still not considerable, flow to Italy. "They like German girls down there," a souteneur

remarked, explaining that the girls generally worked their way from city to city southward from Trieste. He knew a man, he said, who took six girls to Italy, paying all their expenses. Two of them were in licensed houses, the other four in cafés. They were only engaged for three months. They would probably enough come back to Germany.

The chief source of evil so far as the number of girls affected goes, is clearly the temptation to join travelling theatrical companies. Girls, it is explained, will give anything to get on any kind of a stage, most of them thinking they only need the opportunity to become " stars," and parents seem to give their consent with disturbing readiness. Example after example is quoted to show what the dexterous appeal to light-hearted and light-headed ambition leads to. A troupe of from ten to fifteen minors was taken off by a German woman to Athens to dance and sing in a café-chantant. Seven of them were sent home in a pitiful state. They said they got starvation wages, they were expected to persuade men to drink, and at night the manageress brought men to the house where she and they lived, and engaged, with them, in immoral practices.

The sombre history of four German women,

members of an operetta-company that went bankrupt at Buenos Ayres, is given thus :

A. Committed suicide when she discovered she had contracted venereal disease.
B. Attempted suicide.
C. Disappeared.
D. Found a lover, who took charge of her.

There is, of course, sometimes a difficulty about passports, but that is largely removed when the parents give their consent for the girl's journey, as they often do, apparently sharing her own illusions as to the career opened up, particularly if she is enabled to send them a few marks at first to justify her expectations. In the case of girls under 18 the consent of a public body known as the Children's Board has to be obtained. It is interesting to note that railway employees were specially directed, by an instruction of 1922, to keep a vigilant watch for traffickers on board the trains, and rewards were offered for action leading to the arrest of a trafficker or at any rate to the rescue of a victim of his dealings.

Switzerland.

In a country where administration is so efficient and religious sentiment so strong as it is in Swit-

zerland, one would expect the evils of prostitution and the White Slave Traffic to be considerably less acute than in most European countries. That in fact, is the case, though technical difficulties are sometimes caused by the fact that it is the different cantons which deal with prostitution, not the Federal Government. In the principal towns there were no licensed houses, though in Geneva they were only abolished in 1925. There is a general testimony that the police deal severely with solicitation in the streets, and that public opinion is so strongly opposed to the idea of licensed houses that it is quite impossible for a house to open without the police discovering it, or the fact being reported by some private citizen. Girls interviewed by the investigators said : " You have got to keep your eyes open all the time. The police are so strict. If you speak to a man in the street, they send you to prison."

As regards the actual traffic from abroad, Switzerland is faced with certain obvious difficulties owing to its division into French-speaking, German-speaking and Italian-speaking districts. It is in some cases by no means easy to discover, for example, whether a girl is French or French-Swiss, and there were a number of French and Italian women in the Geneva houses till these were

abolished. Here again, however, the police are active, and any foreign woman found practising prostitution is immediately expelled. The figures relating to such expulsions bear witness to the vigilance of the authorities. At the same time Switzerland provides rather striking evidence of the effect of demand and supply, several madames having explained frankly to the investigators that when any influx of visitors to a town led them to expect an increase of clientèle, they brought in girls from France or elsewhere. A conversation between one investigator and the proprietress of a house at Geneva in the year before the houses there were closed is instructive. The occasion was a Gymnastic Festival which brought a large number of visitors to Geneva. The madame declared, " I have nine girls to-night. I engaged three extra because of the customers we are expecting." " Where do you get your girls just now ? " she was asked, " in the town ? " " No, almost all my girls are French. I have got friends at Paris, and whenever I need anyone, I have no trouble in getting her. All the same, things are getting more difficult. You see, the Swiss inspectors at the frontier are becoming very strict. When the girls try to cross the frontier they won't let them come in. They put all sorts of questions to them,

want to know where they are going, what they are going to do at Geneva, and so on—and I am talking about women of at least twenty-five."

The Swiss investigation has thrown light on one other serious aspect of the traffic, the danger of engagements at music halls or dancing establishments, where hard contracts and disgracefully inadequate salaries almost compel a girl to supplement her pay in the easy and obvious way. There is printed in the Report an actual contract which girls engaged at a certain well-known restaurant and dancing establishment at Geneva are required to sign. It is much too long and elaborate for quotation here, but it is reproduced in full in the second part of the Report. The girl in question, it may be mentioned, was aged eighteen, and she was engaged as an artist to amuse customers. "This contract," observe the investigators, "shows how under the terms of a binding obligation a girl may find herself completely at the mercy of her employer, may be transferred to another town at his discretion, may be dismissed for a number of reasons over which she herself has no control, may be required to work every evening for an unlimited number of hours for the most meagre pay, and how she is subject to fines at the caprice of her employer for disobeying rules of which she

knows nothing until they are posted up each day. The inhumanity of contracts of that kind," it is justly added, " must inevitably lead to the worst disasters in the case of a foreign girl alone in a town completely unfamiliar to her, receiving pay of five francs (4s. a day), and without a friend to turn to when she is dismissed without notice."

The engagement of foreign girls under such conditions as these accounts for practically the whole of such import traffic as exists. With regard to the export traffic, it appears clear that the rigorous supervision exercised at the frontiers prevents any Swiss girl from being taken abroad for immoral purposes, though, no doubt, since Switzerland is to some extent a transit country, foreign girls concerned in the traffic from time to time pass through it. Broadly speaking, Switzerland can justly claim to have as clean a sheet as any European State.

Italy.

The report on Italy is lengthy and contains some interesting features, notably a passage on the regular exchanges of girls between different towns. In Italy prostitutes must be registered, and houses of prostitution authorised. No woman under 21 may live in a licensed house, and minors under 18

of either sex are prohibited from entering such premises. In nine towns visited the total number of licensed houses was 289, or an average of 32, and in Florence 35 were reported.

It is clear from the evidence as to the exchanges of girls that souteneurs, or some rather different type of agent, play a much larger part than in most other countries. These exchanges take place twice a month, and are represented as necessary to satisfy customers, who appear to demand this degree of novelty. The police are said to be cognisant of the practice and to make no objection. Madames rely on the agents to place their old inmates and to find them new ones. To quote from an agent encountered at Naples, "What's already old here is new at Palermo." So complete is this system that it is claimed that a girl who owes her madame money, and succeeds in leaving her none the less, can get no place in any house in Italy.

Recent Italian laws have done something to prevent the exploitation of girls by madames (by prohibiting the latter from taking away from their inmates money or clothing or gifts from their clients) and the establishment of a Central Office for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children has enabled concerted action to be

organised against the actual traffic, as distinguished from ordinary prostitution. There appears, however, to be no doubt that some traffic, both inward and outward, exists, for the number of foreign prostitutes in Italy is increasing (the proportion of foreigners to native women registered in 1925 was 23 per cent.), and the number of Italian prostitutes encountered abroad, notably in Latin America, is by no means negligible.

As regards inward traffic, there is no discrimination against the entry of prostitutes as such, though no woman or child likely to become a charge to the community is allowed to come in. Neither are foreign prostitutes expelled unless convicted of some offence. Most of the foreign women in Italian houses come from adjacent countries, such as France, Austria, Jugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Germany. If it is suspected that they are being brought in as part of an organised traffic the officials are instructed to refuse them entry, but, as has just been explained, a woman coming in alone, and apparently quite independently, is not stopped.

One French prostitute met at Naples described in detail her journeyings in 1924. Coming from Marseilles she crossed the Franco-Italian frontier by Ventimiglia, and went straight to Genoa,

whither an agent at Marseilles had directed her. No difficulties at all were raised at the passport examination. Thence she passed on to Rome, after that to Naples, and when encountered she was on the point of leaving for Palermo. The same woman gave some information of interest on the financial side of her calling. "No more souteneurs for me," she said. "I had one once. He sent me to Panama and made me give him all my money. I got away, and since then—no more souteneurs. My mother has ten kids, and instead of giving my money to a man I send it home. I am doing very well here. I've earned 3,000 lire in three months. I expect to stay some time at Palermo and make at least 5,000."

On the other hand a German woman who was questioned at Genoa gave a far more depressing picture of the financial outlook. She was deep in debt. "I have been here for three years," she said, "trying all the time to get free of debt. By July I shall be able to get away, for I shall have paid everything off by then. I have to make 150 lire a day to keep 25 lire. If I bring in 150 lire, 75 of it comes to me, and the madame who keeps the house gets the other 75. I have to pay 25 lire for board. That leaves 50. Out of that there's 5 lire a day for the doctor, and another 5—150

a month altogether—for the police (apparently some local tax). All foreign women have to do that. That leaves me 35 lire, and what with laundry and other minor expenses I am left with barely 25 lire at the end of the day."

The Italian authorities display considerable energy in their fight against the traffic. The Report quotes a circular despatched by the Ministry of the Interior to all Prefects throughout the country, warning them of the presence in Italy of various undesirable individuals, including a foreigner called F, who was touring with a troupe of dancers, in spite of the fact that he had been prohibited from pursuing this calling in his own country on account of the infamous traffic organised by him and a woman living with him. Details are also given of a very successful bit of police work carried out at Trieste and Venice on the basis of information obtained by the Italian consul at Alexandria from his French colleague in that town and telegraphed by him to Trieste. As a result a well-known trafficker was arrested in Venice and sent back to Egypt to be sentenced to several years' imprisonment, and a French prostitute working with him was expelled.

Serious endeavours are made to prevent anything like a white slave traffic out of Italy, and the

regulations governing emigration are admirable. The two most relevant lay it down that

(a) Minors must have received a definite engagement in the form of a written contract approved by the consul for the district to which they are travelling ; and

(b) They must during the voyage be placed in charge of a trustworthy person, who will undertake in writing to be responsible for them and accompany them to their destination.

Unfortunately the regulations seem to be easily evaded by girls who choose to describe themselves as artistes. Here once more the perils of the girl artiste's life are vividly illustrated. It appears to be perfectly simple for a girl to secure membership of some recognised artistes' association, which confers the right to cheap travel on railways and at the same time serves as a sufficient guarantee of serious occupation to satisfy the passport and emigration authorities completely. There appears to be no doubt not only that prostitutes, professional and occasional, avail themselves of this privilege, but that girls who go abroad in this way to an actual engagement too often relapse into prostitution. Early in 1925 advertisements appeared in Florence

papers for girls to go as dancers to Buenos Ayres. It was found that 18 girls, many of them under 21, agreed to go, and that their passage was booked in a boat sailing from Genoa in March. Enquiries by the authorities produced the information that the advertisement had been inserted by the brother of the keeper of a Buenos Ayres club well known as an immoral resort. The girls were stopped in time and proceedings were taken against the advertiser as a white slave traffic agent.

The general conclusion is that the traffic exists, but that it is on the whole difficult and expensive. Souteneurs themselves speak as if the business of getting a girl out of Italy was hardly worth while.

The easiest way is for a girl to travel first to an adjacent country—naturally fewer questions are asked if she is merely crossing a frontier than if she is going to America—and from there book on to her ultimate destination. A souteneur at Genoa advised as to the approved method. "The best way," he said, "is to get into France and from there go where you like. If you start from Italy it's difficult. The girl can get a passport for France all right. Your friend can go on ahead to Marseilles, and from there write her a letter that she can show. Once she's at Marseilles the

Italian consul will visa her passport for the Argentine."

Export traffic channels run mainly to North Africa and South America. One of the simplest ways is to go to Tripoli "for the needs of the garrison." Every facility is given for that, and from Tripoli it is quite easy to go on anywhere else.

A good many girls manage to get across the sea as stowaways, usually with the connivance of some of the crew. The investigators consider that the Italian system, already described, of a constant interchange of girls between brothels tends to foster a traffic both external and internal by creating a steady demand for younger girls as the older ones are discarded or exported.

In the course of a lengthy comment on the Report the Italian Government, attempting to draw a sharp distinction between the authorisation and the toleration of prostitution, claims that regulation in the ordinary sense does not exist in Italy. To that the Body of Experts rejoins with a good deal of force that an assiduous examination of the most recent Italian laws on the subject shows that Italy's recognition of prostitution differs in no material respect from what in other countries is habitually termed regulation.

Czechoslovakia.

Czechoslovakia, like Switzerland, is a small country, but a transit country, and a country of fairly efficient administration. Among its peculiar difficulties is the fact that, being a State newly created after the War, it still contains considerable foreign elements, notably Austrian, German and Russian. There has been no State regulation of prostitution in Czechoslovakia since 1922. There were then eight licensed houses in Prague. These were all closed, and their inmates took to solicitation in the streets and cafés. Police supervision was at the time of the enquiry inadequate, since a municipal police had not been organised, and the national police was not sufficiently staffed to deal effectively with street conditions in the towns. The prostitutes themselves declared that after the houses were closed the police left them free to do what they liked.

There exist, or existed at the time of the enquiry, no reliable statistics. The figures given for Prague by the Chief of Police suggested that there were in the city in 1923, 2,500 prostitutes, of whom 54 were foreign. In 1924 the number had risen to 4,208, of whom 72 were foreign. All were over twenty-one years of age. Most of the foreign girls

were German, Hungarian or Austrian, and many were merely passing through the country. One madame mentioned also the presence of a good many Russians, observing that Prague is a city of many different nationalities. An Austrian prostitute encountered by the investigators spoke without enthusiasm of conditions in Prague. "Everything here," she said, "goes on in the streets and the bars. I used to be in a house. When the houses were closed I had to go off like the others. I find better customers, but the work is hard. I am on the streets eight hours a day. I don't earn much. Business is not good. There are kids of sixteen who are out every evening. They don't do badly."

A satisfactory aspect of the traffic so far as Czechoslovakia is concerned is the vigilance exercised on the frontiers, particularly over girls attempting to leave the country. With regard to the inward traffic, the investigators conclude that it amounts to very little at Prague, though probably it counts for rather more at places like Karlsbad and Marienbad in the tourist season. As regards any outward traffic from Czechoslovakia, the claims of the officials regarding the strictness of supervision are completely borne out by the stories of prostitutes and souteneurs themselves. Sou-

teneurs admit that the passport régime is so strict that it is practically impossible to take a Czechoslovak girl under age out of the country without marrying her first.

A prostitute who discussed the matter was very explicit. " It's very hard for a girl to get a passport," she said. " Look at the conditions. If she's under age, she must get her parents' permission. Sometimes that's very difficult. I know a girl who had a fine chance to go off to Egypt with a man, but she couldn't get a passport. He did everything possible, but it was no good. He even produced letters declaring that she had work waiting for her at Alexandria, but the girl couldn't get her passport because her parents refused their permission. She was nineteen, so she wasn't by any means a kid."

Among the instances of girls who had been stopped at the frontier figures one incident related by an official, who said that three girls, all under age, applied for passports for Buenos Ayres. They were accompanied by a woman, who was in charge of them, and they were going to an aunt at Buenos Ayres. The official's suspicions were aroused, and he declined to issue passports without further enquiries. The enquiries were made by the

Czechoslovak consul in the Argentine and revealed the fact that the so-called aunt was the keeper of a house of ill-fame at Buenos Ayres. The girls were immediately sent home, and the woman who was with them went on by herself.

One isolated but successful enterprise was reported by a souteneur, a friend of the man who put it through by means of a fraudulent marriage. "The chap was married already," he explained, "but his wife was at Rio. His passport bore the entry 'bachelor.' He got the girl—his new wife—to fix herself up with a separate passport, and when he took the tickets for Rio he booked for her to a place a little further off, so that his wife wouldn't see the girl's name on the landing list. He was taking the girl to a fellow at Rio. She was about 20 and had been in a business-house at Prague."

Though the investigators report a slight increase in the number of Czechoslovakian women registered as prostitutes in Italy, they record their general opinion that the export traffic from Czechoslovakia is inconsiderable, and add that one of the encouraging features is the co-operation established between the Czechoslovakian Government and neighbouring countries for the suppression of the traffic.

Austria.

Licensed houses have been abolished in Austria. Prostitutes for the most part make use of rooms in little hotels called "Stunden-hotel" (Hour-hotels) because they let rooms by the hour. These establishments are under the surveillance of the police, as to whose vigilance, both here and in the streets, prostitutes and souteneurs alike speak with mingled bitterness and respect. ("No matter how small a policeman's pay," said one girl, "you can't bribe him.") All prostitutes are required to be registered and to present themselves weekly for a medical examination. No girl under 21 is permitted to practice prostitution, and on registration she must give proof of her age. That, of course, does not mean that clandestine prostitution is not practised extensively, as elsewhere, and an unusual feature is the frequency with which it takes place by day rather than by night, numbers of girls making it their habit to come into Vienna for this purpose in the morning and returning to their homes in the suburbs by night.

One girl interviewed by the investigators spoke freely of the conditions of a prostitute's life in Vienna. When the licensed houses were closed four years before, she explained, all the girls were

driven into the streets. That, she added, was in reality an improvement. She would never work in a "house" again at any price. "As it is, I make my own money, I am my own mistress, I can go where I like, I can choose the men I care for. In those houses it was awful. You had only one day off a week. Some days I had to receive fifteen men, and after all the work I did I had nothing left. Board and lodging and tips ate it all up." All the same the life in the streets was hard, for there were plain-clothes police always on the watch, as well as the uniformed men, and prostitutes were not allowed to frequent café-concerts or dancing bars, and they had to have cards and medical examinations, just as in the old days of the licensed houses. The women who earned money were the waitresses and artistes in the cafés. They were all of them in the profession, and they could usually find someone to take home with them after closing time—though that was not till four in the morning.

There appears to be very little traffic into Austria from other countries, though there is a considerable internal movement (not necessarily promoted by souteneurs) from the provinces to Vienna. A certain number of Polish girls were reported in the Yiddish part of the city, but not enough to suggest that a traffic of any volume

existed. A certain number of Austrian girls, on the other hand, are constantly moving outwards, either to Italy (on a small scale) or to South America *via* Hamburg, where some of them ply their trade for a while before sailing.

But the authorities do a good deal to impede the traffic. There are public employment bureaus, and an official emigration bureau for emigrants, and private employment agencies are under official supervision. Any persons under 18 seeking employment abroad must first obtain the consent of the Court. Women and girls, moreover, on applying for a passport, have to appear at the office of the morals police, who, having full information at their disposal, make a point of warning them of any unsatisfactory conditions in the country of their destination, and in doubtful cases of stopping the journey altogether.

The traffic, however, if not considerable, is by no means non-existent. At the time of the investigators' visit the underworld was talking a good deal about a trafficker from Hamburg, who was enlisting recruits at Vienna. One of the girls he had approached unsuccessfully gave some particulars of the offer. "I've had the chance," she said, "of going off to South America with a boy, and all expenses paid. It wasn't my own boy. It

was a man who had friends at Buenos Ayres. It was they who were going to pay my expenses." Further conversation elicited the explanation, " Our sort can't travel like respectable people. If it gets known that we're in the profession they won't let us into a foreign country. We've got to travel as artistes or something like that. This chap fixes that up for us, so that we can even show an engagement contract for Buenos Ayres. In that way we can get in without much trouble." Another girl, speaking of the same individual, added, " Of course, we've got to pay him back by working it off. You have to work wherever he sends you. That's the chief reason why I wouldn't go. You could never pay off all the money he advances. It would take too long." The trafficker seems, however, to have picked up a good number of Austrian and German girls, whom he took to the Argentine as a concert-company.

Such outward movement from Austria as exists was temporarily accentuated, as might be expected, after the closing of the licensed houses in Vienna. Buenos Ayres seems the favourite goal of the Austrian prostitute who leaves her country, but though there are a few traffickers (like the person just described) who seek recruits in Vienna as well as in Germany for the South American market,

there is nothing to suggest that this export traffic assumes at all formidable proportions.

Hungary.

The investigation in Hungary was made during the period of monetary inflation, when the crown stood at something like 370,000 to the £. That fact determined the whole condition of prostitution, for it meant that while there was obviously no inducement to any foreign woman to come into Hungary as a prostitute, there was every inducement to Hungarian prostitutes to get out, though here again the usual difficulty arose that few of them had money for the journey.

State regulation exists in this country, and the restrictions imposed suggest that the idea of the authorities is that prostitution can be rife without limitation so long as it is not too much obtruded on the public gaze. Thus the licensed houses must be so placed as not to shock a respectable neighbourhood. The windows must be kept closed and fitted with frosted glass. There must be only one woman to a room, and all of them must be over 21. In spite of this, the report of the investigators is that some of the side-streets of Budapest are crowded with prostitutes, lolling on

the doorsteps and soliciting the passers-by. As many as ten to fifteen could be seen soliciting outside some of the houses. The women themselves said the police never troubled about them. Official records show that 43 per cent. of the women registered in 1920—apparently a quite typical year—had been domestic servants.

The general testimony was that business was very bad, and the managers of the houses complained in particular of the competition of the girls of the streets. "A house like this finds it a job to exist at all. We aren't allowed to invite people in. We can't have agents, and we are obliged to wait for our regular customers or to hope someone will ask a cabman or a taxi-driver for the address of a good house. The street women can work as they please, and they have no overhead charges to bear. We have got to keep to the regulations and at the same time meet heavy expenses. Why, you'll find kids of 15 in the streets who'll solicit men for 50,000 crowns (say 3s.). Is it any wonder that we can't make money?"

The result of these conditions is that, according to one madame, the girls in a licensed house are always in debt to the manager. "Suppose they want to leave you?" asked the investigator.

" They've got to pay up first, or else go off naked. I keep their clothes."*

The shortage of housing accommodation in Budapest has led to the requisitioning of a good deal of property by the authorities. That has resulted in a diminution of the number of licensed houses, but it may be questioned whether it has actually diminished prostitution, so much of which is of the clandestine form, and as such involves very largely girls under 21. Many of these explain that they are at work in the day, but have to take to prostitution in the evening to make ends meet. " I only stay out till midnight," one of them said, " because I have to start to work at seven in the morning. I only go out three times a week." She added that she picked up in this way the equivalent of eight to twelve shillings a night.

As might be supposed, under conditions such as these there was no living to be made by souteneurs, of whom few are found in Hungary. For the same reason there is no inflow of foreign prostitutes into the country. Not a single foreigner, indeed, had been registered as a prostitute at Budapest since 1918. A serious attempt, more-

* On this the Hungarian Government comments that there exists a Decree of the Ministry of the Interior forbidding the tenants of licensed houses to keep the inmates' clothing.

over, appears to be exerted to prevent any traffic out of the country, particularly rigorous enquiries being made when a girl applies for a passport to take up an engagement in certain European and South American countries. On the other hand, a madame declared " A girl can get a passport easily enough. But she hasn't got the money for the journey. That's the trouble."

The Hungarian Government itself, in its reply to the League experts' questionnaire, mentioned that a good many girls went to Rumania and Jugoslavia as domestic servants or artistes, and added that girls taking engagements as artistes in these countries are more or less forced into prostitution by the managers of the pleasure resorts. There follows this significant sentence : " The fact that in Rumania and Jugoslavia, where State regulation has, it appears, ceased to exist, women artistes coming from abroad have to submit to a medical examination for venereal disease bears out this suggestion."

There are considerable evidences of official activity—regarding which it must be remembered that authorities consulted by the investigators would naturally make the most of these. One quoted in the Report concerned a servant who had been persuaded by an individual called H.E. to

enter a licensed house. On applying to the police for the necessary card she was interviewed by an official, who brought home to her the irreparable consequences of the step she was taking. She then confessed that she was acting at the instigation of an acquaintance. Proceedings were accordingly taken against the latter.

The regulations regarding emigration are satisfactory, though the important consideration, of course, is not what the regulations look like on paper but how they are administered. Women between 12 and 40 applying for passports for certain countries in Europe and South America have, over and above the general formalities, to produce a certificate from a Hungarian diplomatic representative or consul in the country of destination, guaranteeing the reputability of the concern for which they are to work, and indicating the nature of the employment and the prospect of regular remuneration.

The general conclusion of the investigators is that, while Hungarian girls are found living as prostitutes in countries adjacent to Hungary and in Latin America, there is no considerable traffic out of the country. The traffic, however, might easily grow, but for the vigilance of the police, in view of the obvious financial inducement to migra-

tion from a country where conditions are as hard as they were in Hungary at the time of the investigation. It is a little ironical to think that the economic recovery of Hungary, effected since then by the agency of the League of Nations, may have had the incidental effect of improving the outlook for prostitution.

[In 1927, since the investigators' visit, the licensed house system was abolished in Hungary.]

CHAPTER VII

EASTERN EUROPE

The frontier countries of Europe in the east—Russia being for the present left out of account—include two, Poland and Rumania, recognised as among the chief sources of supply for the export traffic to South America and the Levant. The Polish authorities are clearly doing everything possible in the face of grave difficulties to keep prostitution and various developments of it in check. About Rumania it is hardly possible to speak with the same assurance. The whole report on the latter country gives, rightly or wrongly, a picture of a land where promiscuity is almost a normal attribute of womanhood. It is only fair in that connection to point out that the Rumanian Government takes definite exception to the investigators' general verdict. Latvia presents no characteristic of special interest except the strange association of orange-smuggling with dependence on women as a means of livelihood for souteneurs. Greece illustrates perhaps more convincingly than

any other country the perils of the girl-artiste's life, and in the report on Turkey there is brought to light the existence of a merciless system of debt-slavery which fetters a prostitute to her profession for life.

Latvia.

Latvia, wedged in as it is between Estonia, Lithuania, and Soviet Russia, is essentially a country of transit, and the purpose of the investigators was to discover how far it was an outlet or inlet for girls whose movements were ordered by souteneurs. It may be said at once that the country is given a very nearly clean sheet, various rumours detrimental to the reputation of Latvia being thereby set at rest.

Licensed houses in this country were abolished in 1923. Some clandestine houses are known to exist, but they carry on their operations "with discretion." All prostitutes of over 16 are required to register, but the extent to which this ordinance is observed is shown by the official (police) computation that apart from the 465 actually registered there are some 4,000 clandestine prostitutes in the country.* About half the girls registered are of other than Latvian nationality,

* Later official reports reduce the number to between 800 and 900.

but that is explained by the existence in the country of an abnormal proportion of minority races—Russians, Poles, Lithuanians and Jews. It is not to be taken as evidence of an inward traffic.

A good many souteneurs were encountered, but few if any of them depended on women for their livelihood. They derive their income mainly from defrauding the public revenue in one way or another, largely, it is interesting to learn, by smuggling oranges. It appears that apples are largely grown in Latvia, and that the Government thinks that fruit-eaters may quite reasonably be encouraged to stick to the native product. It has, therefore, put a heavy tax on oranges—to the not inconsiderable advantage of various shady characters who, with the aid of confederates on shipboard, get oranges ashore by invisible routes and sell them by the case. A similar traffic in spirits and tobacco helps to keep things going. The official view is that there are few cases, if any, in Latvia of souteneurs living on women. Some men of that type live with women, but they take the woman's money only when they are out of work themselves.

Extensive investigations have failed to produce any convincing evidence of traffic out of Latvia. The passport system appears to be well organised, and full enquiries are made in the case of girls

desiring to go abroad without good reason. On transit traffic, of course, no such watch can be kept, and one official, asked about forged passports, admitted it was impossible to check this. " In Soviet Russia," he said, " there are 36 different States, and each State issues its own passport." At a home for unmarried mothers, which also takes in young prostitutes, no case had ever been encountered of a souteneur approaching a girl with a view to taking her abroad.

From Latvia comes a valuable testimony to the League of Nations. Its author was a souteneur who was explaining why he stayed in the country. " I've got friends in Brazil and the Argentine," he observed, " but I'm quite as satisfied here. Travel costs a lot of money, and it's very easy to get nabbed. The League of Nations is looking after the business, and we know what that means." As in every country, the souteneurs claimed that if you really wanted to get a girl out you could always do it, but it might of course happen that the woman you were after had a man. In that case he would have to be reckoned with, for " no man would let his girl go off with another fellow without being paid for it."

The general verdict of the underworld in Latvia is, in brief, " very little doing here."

Poland.

Poland, in spite of the tribute paid by the investigators to the efforts of its Government, is one of the chief European centres of the traffic, the evidence of the existence of a steady flow of girls to France and Latin America being overwhelming. One point of local interest is the opportunity provided by the relations between Poland and the Free City of Danzig for girls to evade most of the usual passport difficulties. For the passage from Poland to Danzig only a card of identity is needed. From Danzig it is possible to take a motor-bus into East Prussia, and from there to cross the so-called Polish Corridor westwards into Germany in a "sealed" train in which there is no customs examination by Polish officials. The point about this expedient is that it avoids any examination of passports by Polish officials anywhere, and as the forged passports held by the girls and the souteneurs are Polish the German officials are unlikely to detect them, though they would recognise forged German passports readily enough.

That, however, concerns the export traffic in particular. A word must first be said on the conditions as regards prostitution in Poland itself. One of the investigators had special opportunities

for making observations about that, for he was fortified with a most cordial letter of introduction from a trafficker in Paris to a colleague in the same line of business in Warsaw. The Polish Government, of course, has to face peculiar difficulties owing to the fact that the country is still largely a racial conglomeration, that the legal systems previously in force in Russian Poland, German Poland and Austrian Poland have not yet been effectively unified, and that the Government has neither the funds nor the administrative experience to take as vigorous measures as it would like against various abuses. Registration of prostitutes exists, but licensed houses have been abolished. The same applies to Dantzig, where the prostitutes report that the police are very strict and that they find it hard to make both ends meet, much more to support a souteneur.

In Poland itself there is a regulation providing that not more than two persons practising prostitution professionally shall live in the same house. At Cracow it was stated that girls of 16 were registered as prostitutes if there seemed to be no way of redeeming them from the practice. In 1925 there were 16 girls registered in that city as semi-prostitutes, being, as it appeared, women who supplemented inadequate earnings in their regular

occupation by occasional prostitution. It is interesting to note an entry in the Report to the effect that "the Ministry of the Interior has already begun to take preliminary steps for the organisation of a force of women police for dealing with all questions of morals," and in September, 1927, the Polish Government informed the League that this force had in fact been constituted by the action of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, its main task being to patrol railway stations with a view to affording protection against persons attempting to impose themselves on women travelling alone. The measure was stated to have had excellent results.

There are evidences of a certain amount of traffic from one part of the country to another, but the Ministry of the Interior is working hard to combat this, by making subventions to societies for the protection of women and children and by exercising the most rigorous supervision over employment agencies. There appears to be very little inward traffic, though the mixed character of the population of the country makes it difficult to detect foreign women who have come in for purposes of prostitution.

It is the export traffic that gives Poland an undesirable, and it may be hoped merely a tempor-

ary, notoriety. To speak plainly, it is one of the most valuable recruiting-grounds for Latin America. Jewish girls seem to be particularly susceptible to these dangers. Agents known throughout the international underworld make Warsaw their headquarters. One of them, referred to merely as 6-T, receives a good deal of attention at the hands of the League's investigator. Three or four souteneurs a month, so the investigator was told in Paris, go to Warsaw from South America, and each of them makes at once for 6-T, who is always in a position to supply their needs. This personage, indeed, offered the investigator three girls on the spot, two of them under 21. He mentioned a trafficker who had been to him earlier in the month and gone off with " three fine girls, absolutely first-class." He admitted that he had procured girls not already prostitutes for overseas, and boasted of his ability to fulfil any requirements. " Do you think," he asked, " the boys from all over the world would come to me if I didn't deliver the goods ? Look at this, here are letters from Havana, from the Argentine, from Brazil, from South Africa, all asking me to remember them. If you want a ' green fruit,' I can get one for you."

Led on to pursue this question of the procuration of innocent girls, or at any rate of women not

professional or habitual prostitutes, 6-T said he could supply at once a servant girl of 18. She would be " quite easy to pick up." She would go quietly. She would do anything he (6-T) told her. Putting the matter briefly, 6-T observed " I can find you enough women to load a whole ship," and he outlined a detailed procedure for getting them out of the country, since the investigator was at the disadvantage of not speaking Polish or Yiddish.

A great deal of passport-forging goes on in Poland, regular centres of this industry having been discovered in Warsaw and Lemburg. Sham offers of marriage are common. For example, one trafficker was caught trying to take four girls, two of them aged 17 and 18 respectively, into Czechoslovakia, and from there to the Argentine, *via* Trieste. He was charged with having proposed marriage to each of them, though he had a wife already living in Czechoslovakia. Relatively large numbers of Polish prostitutes are encountered in Latin America. Some of them had not practised prostitution previously. One souteneur in Rio de Janeiro spoke of his girl. " We have been together five years now," he said. " She's a Pole. I came with her from Warsaw." " Was she ' working ' there ? " he was asked. " A little.

Not much. I took her with me to Paris and then to London. She's a good girl. I want to pick up a few thousand dollars and buy a house. Then she can go easy." Another girl told her own story. "I am 20," she said. "I was born at Warsaw. I never practised prostitution till I came to Rio on a French boat, in March, 1923. All the same I admit my associations at Warsaw weren't very respectable. I came to South America to earn money. One of my friends, a prostitute too, persuaded me to come here. I haven't a souteneur, and I hope I shall be able to get back to Poland within a year. My family live in Warsaw still."

Evidences of the traffic indeed accumulate. There is, for example, the case of one I.M., *alias* F.K., *alias* C., who was condemned to various terms of imprisonment as a trafficker and who was found on arrest to be in possession of Argentine, British and Polish passports, and was proved guilty of having taken more than thirty girls to Buenos Ayres and Brazil under the pretence of marriage. He had got in touch with them through matrimonial and other advertisements.

But the testimony of individual cases is hardly needed. It is enough to record that at Buenos Ayres alone there were in 1921, 20 Polish prosti-

tutes inscribed, 70 in 1922, 65 in 1923, and 66 in the first seven months of 1924. At Rio de Janeiro the numbers were considerably higher. But it is not only Latin America that is involved. In a confidential circular issued in 1924 the Ministry of the Interior made it known that as a result of a report from the Polish consul at a centre in a certain European country, to the effect that numbers of Polish girls who had gone there to work had become the victims of traffickers, the Emigration Office had decided to prohibit altogether the recruiting of girls for employment in that country.

As has been said, the investigators are impressed with the activity of the Polish authorities in the matter of the international traffic. One circular in particular, emanating from the Ministry of the Interior, is quoted, urging the exercise of the greatest discretion in the issue of passports to women and girls, strict investigation into every case of illegal entry into Poland, supervision at railway stations and docks and in hotels and furnished apartment-houses, and the establishment of local committees of the Polish Commission for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children. The investigators' report closes with the appropriate comment, "The fact that the traffic

exists in Poland in so flagrant a form in spite of the efforts exerted by the Government demonstrates once more how essential is international collaboration if this evil is to be suppressed." Since this was written the Polish Government has forwarded to Geneva the text of a law promulgated in July, 1927, greatly strengthening the hands of the police by imposing penalties—not of excessive severity—on anyone " inciting or inducing another person to become a professional prostitute," with an increase of penalty if the purpose is financial gain, and a heavier increase still if the offender stands in certain specified relationships (such as guardian or professional adviser) or if various other aggravating circumstances are present.

Rumania.

There is not much to be said in Rumania's favour so far as the traffic in girls is concerned, except that circumstances are particularly difficult in that country. There existed in 1925, when the investigation was carried out, four different codes of law, Russian, Austrian, Hungarian and Rumanian, and the task of fusing these into a single national code was still uncompleted. These administrative handicaps in States either created or

substantially enlarged as a result of the War, deserve more consideration than they sometimes get.

However that may be, there can be no question whatever that Rumania is a country where prostitution is rife, and where the supply of girls regularly exceeds even the demands which the general standards of the country tolerate or encourage, and that a thriving export trade to the Levant and South America is maintained. The League's investigators visited the capital, Bucharest, and three other towns. From the Chief of Police at Bucharest they obtained very interesting information on the different classes of prostitutes, those definitely registered and subjected to a rigorous medical examination ; those permitted, without definite registration, to visit recognised houses of assignation, provided they pass a medical examination, for which the proprietor of the house pays ; and the clandestines, the number of which is unknown but undoubtedly extremely high. The first class, consisting of inmates of licensed houses, are compelled to pay a proportion of their earnings, stated by the Rumanian Government to be 50 per cent., or rather to have it paid for them by the proprietors of the houses, into a savings bank from which they can only withdraw it with official

approval. This is a measure prescribed in the girl's own interest.

The official age for the registration of prostitutes is 18, but there is plenty of evidence that many girls begin much earlier than that. They can, moreover, quite easily get out of the country, to ply their trade abroad. One prostitute, for example, mentioned that " To-morrow a friend of mine who is only 17 is going to get a passport to go to Paris. A friend has written to her from there, and she has shown the letter. She is in the profession, but she is going as an artiste. Her parents have let her go." The point about the reference to the letter is that all difficulty about obtaining a passport is apparently removed if the applicant can produce a letter from the country to which she desires to travel, purporting to show that she has work waiting for her or friends who will look after her. Obviously such documents can be supplied with the greatest ease by a souteneur, and cannot well be verified.

Nowhere does the supply of actual or potential prostitutes appear to be as abundant as in Rumania. Quite apart from the professionals, it is suggested that practically every girl encountered in a public place or a tea room is ready to go home with a man if he will promise her a pretty dress. The pro-

prietor of one house, asked how she obtained her girls, said at once, "There are more girls in the town than we can employ. You see, they come here from all over Rumania, and when a madame sees a nice-looking girl in the street she invites her into her house."

In two or three conversations the story of conditions in Bucharest is told. One souteneur descanted on the ease with which girls could be picked up in that city. "All along this street," he said, "you find all sorts. They begin very young. Quite a young girl can get a passport if you marry her, and even if you don't it's not very difficult."* Another informant mentioned that in certain parks during the open-air concerts in the evenings you could pick up girls who wanted to get some fun out of life but were not professional prostitutes. He quoted the case of a man who got a hold over a girl he had met in a park at Czernowitz. He was on the point of taking her to Constantinople to practise prostitution there when he was arrested by the Rumanian police.

But the most instructive picture was drawn by an individual identified as 99-P, who remarked encouragingly, "Any night you want to drive

* The Rumanian authorities claim that a law of 1925 has altered this.

round with me I'll show you what I can get with this little car of mine. I'll dress up and we can pick up some of the finest kids you ever saw. It's a very easy town for that. A girl if she's pretty don't have to look for men here. They look for her. Go to X tea-room any afternoon. You'll see the way they go after the young girls. These men here have money. Don't make any mistake about that. It's just as easy for you or me. The girls go out with anyone they think will treat them to a frock. They ain't regulars. Regulars want money, not just to have money spent on them. Take these girls to the cabarets—any place where there's life. I don't say *every* one you come across, but you can always find at least one."

An excess of supply naturally stimulates the export trade. It is painfully significant of the spirit in which this whole business is commonly regarded that the investigators drop naturally into crude commercial language to describe it. Speaking of the volume of the traffic abroad, "The economic depression," they observe, "the depreciation of the currency and an excessive supply of prostitutes, are the chief causes of this situation."

Not much need be said of the actual volume of the traffic. That, indeed, cannot be measured, for most of it is by the nature of things clandestine.

But the facts gleaned as to the directions of the traffic are instructive. It appears that souteneurs in countries as far apart as Mexico, Buenos Ayres, Paris, Egypt and Constantinople have all spoken of Czernowitz as the town to which they resorted most often to replenish their supply of girls.

In a group of eight houses in Constantinople practically every single girl hailed from Czernowitz. The officials there are quite alive to the situation, admitting the existence of a regular traffic from or through Rumania to North and South America and the Near East. Some of them mentioned Bombay as one of the destinations to which girls are sent.

It must be remembered that the transit trade, to which some reference has been made, may be of considerable importance in a country of the geographical position of Rumania, many girls taking this route southward from Poland, as well as eastward from Hungary. There is undoubtedly a migration of Hungarian prostitutes into Rumania but how many of them remain in the country it is hard to say.

Altogether there are few countries where drastic regulations, and much more, a steady raising of the national standards of morals, are shown to be more

urgently needed than in Rumania. At the Eighth Assembly of the League of Nations the Rumanian woman delegate said that she hoped that in twelve months time, *i.e.*, in September, 1928, she would be able to report that every licensed house of prostitution in her country would be closed. That reform may mean something, but it is clear that prostitution in Rumania is in no way dependent on the existence of licensed houses.

Greece.

Conditions in Greece have been abnormal for the last few years owing to the influx of refugees, numbering not much less than 1,500,000 in all, from Asia Minor. Some of the women among the refugees, particularly those who found themselves separated from relatives and friends, fell into prostitution, failing any other means of livelihood, and to their number must be added Greek prostitutes who returned with the rest of the refugees from Asia Minor.

In Greece itself the system of State regulation was undergoing a certain reorganisation, a special board having been appointed to draw up regulations regarding the inscription of prostitutes, the opening and suppression of licensed houses, and

the rehabilitation of women formerly practising prostitution. The suppression of licensed houses had not gone far, owing, it is explained, to the difficulty of providing for the absorption of the women in industry. Actually five houses had been closed, but there still remained 58 houses, as well as a large prostitutes' camp at the Piræus. This institution was of a low order. It was surrounded by a high wall, and approached by a single entrance guarded by the police. The 96 inmates could neither change their residence nor go out of the camp after nine in the evening without permission of the police.

There were in addition at the Piræus 104 prostitutes registered but otherwise free. While the statute-books contain severe laws against the procuration of minors, a good many offences of this kind are committed. One peculiarly hideous case is reported of a father who first violated his fifteen-year old daughter and then sold her for 6,000 drachmæ to a licensed house. (There are at present about 360 drachmæ to the £). There was another case of a man who brought his wife from Monastir, in Jugoslavia, and sold her to a licensed house in Salonica for 200 drachmæ. Though the age for the registration of prostitutes is fixed at 18, it is admitted that girls younger than

this are in fact registered, " mainly with a view to protecting their health."

The actual traffic takes in Greece a specialised form. There are not many foreign prostitutes at Athens, but at Salonica out of 1,008 registered in the course of the last five years 443 were foreigners, for the most part Jews or Mohammedans. These do not appear to include the " artiste-prostitute " who constitutes the chief characteristic of the underworld in Greece. It may practically be said, according to the investigators, that at Athens and Salonica, particularly the latter, the terms prostitute and artiste are interchangeable. Girls are brought into Greece as singers at cabarets, and not only do they find that they are expected to supplement their meagre earnings by prostitution, but that they are officially assumed to be actually prostitutes. They are obliged to register and to submit to a medical examination for venereal disease.

If a girl, on discovering this system when she reaches Greece from some other country, cancels her contract, as some of them do, she is left penniless in a strange country, and finds herself faced more inevitably than ever with prostitution as the one way of earning a living. This kind of traffic is thoroughly organised. The girls are passed on

to engagements in other countries by the cabaret-managers, who draw a commission for finding them the engagement. They have agents at Paris, Marseilles, Belgrade, Bucharest, Budapest, Vienna and Berlin, and admit that the artistes practise prostitution. But that, they protest, is not their business ; for themselves, " they would like to see cabaret-artistes enjoying a better reputation."

In spite of regulations designed to diminish the dangers of the white slave traffic the number of Greek girls encountered in Alexandria and elsewhere in Egypt shows that there is a steady flow in that direction. Though prostitutes and souteneurs pay the Greek police (trained, by the way, by an Englishman) the compliment of declaring that " they won't take money," there appear to be few difficulties in getting girls out of the country, mainly under the usual guise of artistes. The cabaret-managers admit that they act as agents for this purpose, and a souteneur testified that " at the beginning of the season crowds of them go off." In many cases they are sent as domestic servants, and then given over to prostitution by a souteneur or adopted as someone's mistress.

The line of traffic from Greece to Egypt is well defined. An Athens prostitute mentioned to the investigator that two friends of hers, both under 18,

had got passports and gone off to Egypt. "That's the place to make money," she remarked enviously, adding that she would have gone too, but for that year the season was nearly over. Another girl explained that "Greece is quite different from other countries. The place is over-populated, and they are glad to see us go." The number of Greek girls registered as prostitutes at Alexandria is complete confirmation of these stories. A practised souteneur admitted that it was difficult to get a girl of 16 out of the country, but declared that for one of 18 the matter was simple.

Turkey.

The enquiry carried out in Turkey took place under rather abnormal conditions. In 1925 stability had hardly been firmly established in the young republic. The tides of refugees who had swept through Constantinople in the immediately preceding years had left a considerable deposit still stranded in the European capital. The harems had lately been broken up, and the law forbidding Mussulman women from entering licensed houses had just been repealed. Everything, therefore, was in a state of flux, and the conclusions reached by the investigators are not necessarily a sound

basis for judgments on Turkey of to-day, though no doubt the general picture painted is approximately correct.

Statistics regarding the number of prostitutes in Constantinople are unreliable, though there is registration of girls over 18. It is stated however that 241 such houses existed in 1925. Whether that represented an increase or a decrease on preceding years could not be discovered. The police indeed claim to have photographs and fingerprints of the keepers of houses and of various categories of inmates, but it is clear that police action in suppression of the traffic in girls or any other abuses is wholly inadequate, largely because the police themselves are frequently in league with the offenders.

Almost all the women in Constantinople, whether they are inmates of a house or not, work for a souteneur, but in the economic conditions prevailing they can rarely earn enough to satisfy him. A strange picture was painted for the investigator by a dispensary doctor, who mentioned that souteneurs went and sat outside cafés opposite a licensed house, and each of them chalked on the bar of his chair the number of visitors his particular woman received. If at the end of the day she did not hand over as much as she should she got beaten.

One sinister reference is made to the case of a souteneur who arrived at Constantinople with a girl he had picked up at Czernowitz, and whom he was placing in a house (unregistered) at Constantinople, to " break her in " to prostitution before taking her to Egypt to work for him there.

A peculiar feature of prostitution in Constantinople is the part played by the professional usurer, who involves a girl in debt by advancing money for clothes, police registration and payments to a souteneur, and then piling up interest till it is out of the question for the debt ever to be liquidated. He thus gets the girl completely under his control, particularly as no debtor is allowed to leave the country.

This system is so prevalent in a more or less aggravated form in many countries that it is worth while reproducing the explanation, given by an informer at Constantinople, of its detailed operation. " Take, for example," he said, " the case of a woman put into a licensed house by a souteneur. She has to have money and clothes. She must register with the police and the medical service. This registration costs her 15 to 20 Turkish pounds. Then the souteneur gets about 20 pounds. The madame sends for one of these Persian moneylenders called ' tevadjis.' The

moneylender makes the woman sign a legal receipt for 100 pounds, which she promises to pay back in three months. But she never actually receives that. The interest on 100 pounds is 30 liras for three months ; the lender deducts that to start with. He then gives her enough money for her registration tax, and takes or sends her to a millinery shop where he has an account. He lets her choose the clothes she wants, charging her a higher price for them than he pays himself. The woman has only actually received, in money or in kind, about 40 pounds out of the 100 for which she has pledged herself. The balance of 60 pounds is kept by the moneylender as fee or recompense for his trouble. If the woman is not in a position to settle up at the end of three months—and in most cases she is not—30 per cent. is added for the unpaid balance, and the madame deducts that sum from the girl's earnings. If, on the other hand, she does pay up, but wants more money for clothes or for her souteneur, back comes the moneylender. If the girl contracts venereal disease and is sent into hospital by the authorities she has to pay a pound a day there. If her souteneur wants money while she is away the moneylender is called in once more. If on visiting days her colleagues in the profession go to see her at the hospital and take

her food or some little luxuries, the madame advances the money, but borrows it from the moneylender in the girl's name. By the laws here a woman not settling debts when they are due is liable to 90 days' imprisonment. As these moneylenders hold a legal bond they have the women absolutely in their clutches."

After this demonstration of debt-slavery of the most cynical character it is not surprising to find in the next paragraph mention of another essential characteristic of slavery, purchase and sale. A proprietor of three houses of prostitution offered the investigator several girls. He pointed out the women " for sale," and said they could go off with the investigator at any moment if the latter would settle their debts and give the souteneur of each of them a little something for himself.

Constantinople is so much a city of transit that it is difficult to say how far the arrivals and departures of girls are proof of any definite traffic, though there are signs that such a traffic does exist on a limited scale from Poland. It is not easy to settle in Constantinople without giving full information to the police. But the investigators are satisfied that an outward traffic from Turkey does exist, in spite of the effect of the law forbidding debtors to leave the country (and most of the girls are in debt).

Clandestine departures are by no means impossible, and false passports are fairly freely used. Souteneurs seem to be able to come and go very much as they please, and to arrange with the crews of various vessels to take girls to Egypt or some other destination in the Eastern Mediterranean.

CHAPTER VIII

NORTHERN AFRICA

The only African countries visited by the investigators were three on the northern seaboard, Algeria, Tunis and Egypt. About the two former there is little to be said, except that the fact should not escape notice that here, as in at least one other country (see the report on Germany), the demands of British and American tourists are referred to as an important factor in the maintenance of the traffic in women or some still darker subsidiary enterprise. One other feature of some interest is the strong racial feeling prevailing among the Arabs, no Arab woman consenting under any circumstances to have relations with a white man, though Arab prostitutes for the satisfaction of Arab men abound.

Egypt, as perhaps the main import country of the eastern hemisphere, stands in a different category, though its differences from other countries of demand is one of degree rather than of character. To that judgment, however, one reservation must

be made. Political conditions do not often affect the question of prostitution and traffic very seriously. In Egypt they do, for the division of authority involved in the maintenance of the capitulation system clearly makes action by the Egyptian Government in cases where foreigners are concerned more difficult than it need be. It should be added that the traffic in minors assumes serious dimensions in Egypt.

Algeria.

Algeria is a French possession with close associations with France itself, so much so that French prostitutes do not rank as foreigners. Houses of prostitution receive official authorisation, and prostitutes are registered, but apart from this there are in the Arab quarters numbers of one-roomed hovels where native women ply their trade uncontrolled.

The regulation that girls under 21 may not be registered seems to be a mere ineffective formality. One Polish girl is mentioned, for example, whose passport showed her to be 24. In answer to questions she said she was 19, and had been inmate of a house in Paris, whence she had been brought to Algiers by an individual described as 34-M,

who had paid her travelling expenses. She admitted she had practised prostitution at Warsaw since she was 15.

There is an abundance of similar illustrations of the valuelessness of a passport as evidence of age. Passports are easily forged, but in Algeria the souteneurs take the view that it is simpler to doctor birth certificates, because on the strength of these a passport is issued without any question. One madame observed on the general question of minors, " I've got a French girl here who isn't 20 yet, but she has papers she got hold of at Marseilles that make her pass as 28."

When it comes to native girls the police admit they have to register them as young as 14 in order to put them under medical supervision. Between 14 and 16 a girl gets a green medical card indicating that she is not a professional prostitute, but if it turns out that in fact she is, the card is changed for a red one, and the girl is inscribed just as if she were over 21.

The import traffic at Algiers is mainly seasonal —to use the cold commercial terminology of the report. From December to February the town is much frequented by foreign tourists,* and their

* The first draft of the report had " British and American " tourists, but a more discreetly non-committal adjective has been substituted.

requirements have to be met. Licensed houses at Algiers have, in consequence, close relations with similar establishments at Paris, which send girls south temporarily as they may be needed. One madame enlightened the investigator fully on that. "We have a house at Paris, too," she told him. "Very likely you know it. My partner is managing it at present. She sent me three girls last week. We advance them their travelling expenses provided the girls themselves or their souteneurs furnish the necessary guarantees." The girls, of course, refund the advance out of their earnings. No trouble arises about passports in the case of any French subject landing in Algeria from Marseilles. If a woman thus arriving is suspected of intending to practise prostitution, all that happens is that she is placed on the prostitutes' register.

Export traffic from Algiers exists, but not, it would seem, on a considerable scale. There is no difficulty about leaving the country, except in the case of minors, and thanks to the facility with which false papers can be obtained no girl wanting to leave ever is a minor. One souteneur made some extremely instructive observations on that point. "There are lots of pretty girls in this town," he declared, "but it takes a long time to get hold of them. These little Arab girls would do

finely in other places, but to do anything with them you must be an Arab yourself. Not long ago two of my pals did go off to Paris with two little Arabs, but I don't know how they got on. The kids who were born here are crazy to go and see Paris. You can see them in the streets anywhere. The ones I mentioned have got their birth certificates with them, and whenever they need a passport my pals know someone to fix things up for them."

The eagerness of these provincial prostitutes to get to the centre of things was confirmed by another souteneur in a conversation charged with a certain pathos as well as a certain significance : " I know a fellow," he said, " who went to Constantine (an Algerian town) and got acquainted with a fine little Jewess of only 17. He brought her here and taught her the trade. To begin with there were terrible scenes, but then he took her to Paris. That's where she is now, and they're both getting on like anything."

There are evidences also of a demand from South America for girls from Algeria, for a French souteneur spoke of Mexico and South America as gold-mines, and said he knew a man at Vera Cruz who would pay him anything he liked to ask for a girl. The trouble was that he was " the sort of chap who would only pay up when the goods were

delivered." But in the main Algeria is an import, not an export, country.

Tunis.

Tunis, which adjoins Algiers, is a French protectorate, which means that passage from the one country to the other is easy. The population is extremely mixed, consisting mainly of Arabs, Jews, French, Italians and Maltese, and at certain seasons there is a considerable influx of tourists of different nationalities. There is official regulation of prostitution, and a system of licensed houses, but the clandestine prostitutes of course greatly outnumber those known to the authorities. Few of them appear to be under the legal age (18 for ordinary inscription and 21 for work in a licensed house), but, as in most centres, there is not much difficulty in getting a girl under 21 into a house, as some observations of a madame—instructive regarding the whole practice of prostitution in Tunis—show.

She was asked whether she could take a Spanish girl of 18, and made voluminous reply, " Yes, I can take her," she said, " even if she is only 18. The law says 21, but that's of no consequence. Let me see to it. This is how we arrange it. The girl

must pay for her room and board in advance. My price varies from 25 to 50 francs a day. Of course, lighting and heating and laundry are extras. The man pays what she can get out of him. He has to pay me as well 5 or 10 francs for the use of the room. All the money for drinks comes to me. If the woman has her wits about her she can earn a lot here. She can always have one day off a week, but not Saturdays or Sundays or feast-days, except when she's ill. I've got plenty of birth certificates ready for use. I have French girls and Dutch and Belgian and Italian, and I could do very well with a Spaniard. Will she take the money or her man (*i.e.*, her souteneur) ? Generally the man takes it, but it's all the same to me."

Much of the prostitution at Tunis is carried on in one-room houses, the women being registered with the police and plying their trade quite openly. It is in this kind of house that the girls under age are mostly found. In the Arab quarters the women are established in little cabins of one or two rooms which give shelter to from two to five prostitutes ranging in age from 16 to 30. They can be seen in native clothing in brilliantly lighted rooms awaiting their native clientèle, for these Arab girls refuse absolutely to have relations with Europeans or any other white man. It is said

that if an Arab woman were caught with a white man not only she but the man would run the risk of being heavily handled by any Arab who knew of it. One of the investigators, passing himself off as a Turk, got free access to these houses. In one of them he found a Turkish girl of 17, who said that her parents had brought her from Italy to Tunis three years before, and she sent them all her earnings.

The import traffic into Tunis seems to be almost wholly seasonal, and is facilitated by the fact that many of the houses are run in connection with houses in Paris or Marseilles. A woman described as a deputy-manageress of a Tunis house said she had worked for her chief at Paris, and had to go wherever she was sent. "We all have a sort of contract," she explained. "This madame has two houses in Paris, and she wanted me here. Like X, she has a house at Marseilles as well, and she is constantly changing the girls round." The same informant spoke of a man at Marseilles who provided girls for all such houses, drawing a commission for his services. When asked if the girls thus provided were novices she answered, "No, but I know fellows for whom he has secured novices." An experienced souteneur, also at Tunis, pointed out several Italians similarly

employed, and said, " A couple of years ago I knew some chaps like them who used to go regularly to Sicily to buy girls. You see, the people there are so poor they are always glad to get rid of their daughters."

Sham marriages play much the same part in the traffic at Tunis as elsewhere, as one particularly vile case mentioned in the report indicates. It concerned a prostitute and her souteneur and the history of their relations is thus described by a fellow-trafficker : " He's a dirty beast. He brought that girl from Italy. She thought they were going to get married. He rents a room for her to ply the trade in, and the girl says herself that he beats her to a jelly and takes her last farthing. He'll do for her one day without a doubt. I don't hold with that kind of thing."

The writers of the report on Tunis sum up the situation there in a wise concluding paragraph, which is worth quoting as it stands, for it is of more than merely local application. " The existence of licensed houses and of a clearly-marked seasonal demand for the increase of their inmates," they write, " cannot fail to encourage the import traffic. When such a demand exists and souteneurs or proprietors of houses lay themselves out to meet it, there is a serious danger of girls of less

than 21, or women of unstable character, or women deceived by promises of marriage, being brought into the country and exploited for purposes of prostitution. The situation as diagnosed from observations made at Tunis shows that this danger is real and definite."

Egypt.

In Egypt the traffic in women as distinguished from ordinary prostitution is seen at its height. Certain political circumstances particularly favour it. Egypt, since 1922, has enjoyed political independence, subject to certain important reservations, of which one directly affects the position of the Egyptian authorities in relation to the White Slave Traffic and other offences against morals. The reservation in question perpetuates for the present the system of capitulations, whereby the nationals of a number of Powers enjoy various rights in Egypt, particularly that of being tried by their own consular tribunals. This considerably impedes the action of the police in dealing with prostitution or traffic where foreigners are concerned, and the fact that if a raid is contemplated on a clandestine brothel kept by a foreigner the consul of the country to which the foreigner

belongs has first to be informed, means that often enough the police plans leak out and all damning evidence disappears before the raid. There is clearly a marked difference between the attitude of consuls of different countries in such a matter as this, some being concerned to help and some to hinder, but it is due to the Egyptian authorities to recognise that for the reasons stated they are working under very special difficulties.

There exists in Egypt a regulation system consisting of special "vice districts" in the chief towns, but as usual only a minority of women will live in them, and all the most prosperous houses are clandestine and are found outside the reserved area. Official statements divide the licensed houses into two categories :—

(1) Officially recognised houses occupied by prostitutes of long standing and of various nationalities. The latter in turn may be divided into two classes :—

(a) Women exploited by the madames who lodge, feed and clothe them and appropriate all their profits ; and

(b) Women who simply pay for their board and lodging and keep their

earnings, though most of them in point of fact have a man in the background to whom they hand over the greater part of their profits.

(2) Clandestine houses frequented either by married women who want a little extra money for luxuries and earn it in this way with their husband's acquiescence or without his knowledge ; or by girls exploited by unprincipled parents, or by girls who have been once betrayed and after that take to a life of prostitution.

In Egypt, as elsewhere, no woman under 21 can become an inmate of a licensed house, but in Egypt, as elsewhere, the forging of passports and birth certificates for girls who are actually minors is almost a recognised industry. At all events, the investigators discovered large numbers of girls under age regularly practising prostitution. In Cairo one of them was introduced to a Syrian prostitute of 17 by a souteneur who said he had had relations with her at Beirut years before.

The traffic in minors is, indeed, one of the gravest features of the Egyptian situation. One of the investigators was told by one souteneur of

another who was heavily engaged in transactions of this character, and also incidentally ran a gaming-house. "He brings at least eight girls a year from France," he said. He sells them to the madames. Ask himself; he'll tell you all about it. Sometimes he gets as much as £50. The souteneurs buy them, too. In Egypt you can do what you like. That's why you find souteneurs from all over the world here. They change the girls' ages when they want them to work in a house, because girls of under 21 can't be registered." Another souteneur said he and his friends had brought 18 girls at the beginning of the season for French souteneurs—"not women of 22 or 25, but minors of 18 or 19." The investigators themselves mention having encountered, among others, a French girl who said she was 18 and had been in Cairo for two years; a Turkish girl who said she was 20 and had also been there two years; and another girl in a licensed house who confessed to being only 18. Rather serious abuses are due, as an official Government statement indicates, to employment agencies, which endeavour to recruit for prostitution girls who come to seek posts as domestic servants. Theoretically, the authorities take action against souteneurs, but, as an example just cited shows, it seems clear that they can in fact

pursue their business with little interference, partly at any rate as a result of the capitulations.

But it is from the point of view not of ordinary prostitution but of actual traffic in women that Egypt particularly repays study. In this country the traffic has not to be surmised, it flourishes blatant and almost unconcealed, "particularly," says the investigators, "in the tourist season." A report from the authorities in the Canal zone is perfectly explicit on that point. What it says, textually, is : "There is a constant movement of French girls entering Egypt to practise prostitution by the boats of the ——— line. They travel as stowaways without passports or papers with the connivance of the crew, and it seems that they are usually concealed in the coal bunkers. The captains of the ships say it is impossible to put an end to this traffic, for they cannot make a search in the bunkers because the stokers are an aggressive and dangerous set, composed for the most part of a wild bandit type. That there exists an organisation for the recruitment of these women is established. On one occasion a local souteneur and a brothel-keeper from Cairo came to meet them to help them get ashore."

Unofficial enquiries more than confirm the facts

in this report. Two elements are necessary for the success of the traffic—the forging of papers and the connivance of the crews of vessels plying between Europe and Egypt. A third factor might perhaps be added, the existence of licensed houses which provide a constant demand for fresh inmates. They are ready to pay from 50 to 100 pounds Egyptian for a foreign girl. As for the papers, they can be obtained in European ports like Marseilles, Constantinople and Athens, but apart from that there is a steady production in Egypt itself of forged Egyptian passports which can be posted to the port from which the girl is to sail. One souteneur, for example, mentioned to the investigator that if he wanted to bring in a girl of seventeen there would be no difficulty about the passport. "I can get you one quite easily," he said, "if you give me photographs and a description of your girl. That's all I want." A good deal is done, too, through bribery of the lower officials at the passport office. As a souteneur observed, "It is no use approaching the head men. It is the lower officials, earning £6 to £10 a month, who will oblige for a consideration." Another one explained the procedure a little more fully. He had a friend, he said, at the passport office, and got from him all the certificates or papers he wanted.

" I take my witnesses ; I swear that you are living in my house and that I have known you a long time. You put down your name and the name of your father and mother and your place of birth. Then you sign. That is a laissez-passer. It is valid for a year. You can go where you like and come back when you like. I have marked it valid for ' out ' and ' back.' Every souteneur has one to use like that. The women all have them too. I got over 75 passports for women and souteneurs last year. Don't forget that I can fix you up with an Egyptian or a Rumanian passport or even a Greek. No souteneur can get along and keep out of trouble without at least two different passports."

In spite of the facility with which foreign passports are procurable, the actual smuggling of women into the country without papers at all is widely prevalent. The investigator was given the opportunity of profiting by this procedure. " There is a man at Alexandria," a Cairo souteneur told him, " who can fetch a woman from Marseilles without a passport. The traffic is his only business. Go by Alexandria and tell him what you want. He will bring the girl to Alexandria and you will pay him when she has got there. He will give you the name of the boat and the sailing

date. There are two boats like this, and they make two trips a month. He will also give you the name and addresses of two men on board the ship. He will telegraph to them and then you can wait for the girl to turn up. Write to her and tell her to apply to these men, and they will take her on board. When the boat gets here they will put her ashore and you can meet her." Sometimes, according to the souteneur's testimony, ships like this bring eight or ten girls at a time, often disguised in male clothing. (In 1924 no fewer than 186 women dressed as sailors were stopped at Alexandria alone.) So fully organised is the traffic that the investigator was introduced to a shopkeeper who acted as go-between and held deposits which the souteneurs left in his hands as payments to sailors for handing the girls over. In another case the investigator took part in a conversation between a souteneur and two sailors, who arranged to smuggle in an imaginary girl for the investigator from Marseilles in male clothes for a sum of 16 Egyptian pounds.

These illustrations could be multiplied, but enough instances have been quoted to show that the entry of a foreign prostitute into Egypt presents relatively little difficulty. So far as actual inscribed prostitutes are concerned, the proportion

of foreigners in 1924 was 41 per cent., but as usual this, of course, takes no account of the clandestine prostitutes. The predominant nationalities are French, Italian and Greek.

The export traffic from Egypt is of inconsiderable dimensions. The Government report indeed denies its existence altogether, but it is clear that there is a certain movement of women from Egypt to Bombay, though in some cases Egypt may simply be a country of passage and not the country of origin. Evidence of this particular traffic route came to light in Egypt itself, and in addition a report from the Government of India to the League of Nations Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children mentions that cases of traffic in women from Egypt have been discovered at Bombay.

CHAPTER IX

ANGLO-SAXON AMERICA

Though Canada and the United States between them cover an area a good deal more than double the size of Europe, there is little to be said about either of them in the matter of the traffic in women. There is no State regulation in either country, and cases of traffic are singularly rare, though a common language and similarity of general characteristics would make it almost impossible to detect traffic across Canada's southern frontier if any did exist. Import traffic by the Atlantic ports of the two countries appears to amount to virtually nothing, and on the Pacific seaboard only one class of cases is detected—that affecting Chinese girls, who are literally bought in their own country and as literally sold when they have crossed the Pacific. Canada has been more successful than California in stamping out this abuse, but California no doubt has the more extensive and more difficult problem to handle. Apart from this, Canada and the United States both have almost clean records.

Canada.

Canada is in some respects in a special situation. It possesses long sea frontiers where a strict supervision over the large number of immigrants is exercised, and an extensive lake and land frontier across which passage is practically unhindered. In connection therefore with the White Slave Traffic the problem is twofold, that of the entry of prostitutes by sea (it is universally agreed that there is no exit traffic by this route) and that of their entry or exit by the land and lake frontier, which separates Canada from the United States.

With regard to the latter the data are scanty. Travel from the one country to the other is extremely easy, and there can be little doubt that the general volume of traffic in both directions includes a certain number of women moving northwards or southwards for purposes of prostitution. It must be recognised that in the case of two English-speaking countries so similar in character the movement of women from one to the other can hardly be regarded as a normal example of the traffic as commonly understood, particularly since in this case the women appear to travel at their own instance, and not under the control of souteneurs.

There are nevertheless certain reservations to be

added to this general statement. The investigators found conditions at Montreal definitely unsatisfactory. This is one of the few towns which still maintain recognised houses of prostitution, Prince Rupert being another. In these houses, however, the women are all Canadian, the sole exception reported being one coloured woman in a Prince Rupert house. She had come into Canada from New Jersey at the age of 22. The curious statement is made on the authority of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that the inmates of the houses, where these exist, are women ranging from 30 years of age up to 60, the latter age being, of course, abnormally high. At Montreal there does appear to be a seasonal influx of women from the northern towns of the United States, such as Detroit, Chicago and Buffalo, and a New York souteneur in conversation with one of the investigators spoke of doing good business at Montreal in the summer because there was no need for concealment there, whereas in New York prostitutes plying their profession ran terrible risks.

The coast frontier presents different problems. Canada is, of course, a country with a large annual immigration from Europe. It appears clear, however, that few, if any, professional prostitutes enter by this route. Most of the unmarried

women emigrants are Finns, who come to take situations as domestic servants or to become the wives of farmers. The addresses such women give as their destination are always verified, and, if they are found to be inaccurate, the woman is excluded. The best evidence, however, comes from a madame who told the investigator that she knew practically all the cribs in the town, and there were hardly any foreign women there, except from the United States.

On the Pacific coast the situation is much the same. In Victoria, British Columbia, for example, the Chief of Police stated that prostitution did exist to his knowledge, but it was practised by native Canadian women. All evidence goes to show that there is no actual traffic in that region. It is only of late, however, that that could be said, for till a few years ago there existed a specialised international traffic in girls from China. But an end has been put to that by the breaking up of certain Chinese secret societies called "tongs." It appears that till recently girls were bought in the open market in China and brought by men to Canada with members of the latter's own family, so that the Canadian immigration officials could not distinguish these girls from the others. The demand existed chiefly or solely in the Chinese

restaurants in certain towns in Western Canada, but these restaurants are now so closely watched by the police that the traffic is believed to have disappeared altogether.

As to anything in the nature of an export traffic from Canada, it can be stated with confidence that nothing of the kind exists. Isolated cases are detected of course from time to time, and the report narrates in detail the story of one entirely innocent girl who was persuaded to travel from Canada across the whole length of the United States into Mexico by the receipt of a forged letter from a sister who was living in that country. This appears to have been the work of a souteneur, but the episode stands by itself, and there is nothing to suggest that any considerable number of similar cases could be found.

It is due to the Canadian authorities to recognise that the generally satisfactory conditions prevailing are due in no small measure to the soundness both of the legislation and the administration. The laws against men living on women's immoral earnings are strict, and their execution is a good deal simplified by the provision that a man found living with a prostitute or prostitutes or habitually consorting with women of that class is assumed to be living on their earnings unless he can show

that he has other means of support. On the positive side real protection is provided by the directresses and conductresses who travel on boats and trains to escort women arriving in Canada from overseas. Similar officials are found at the chief points of destination and important junctions. There is also a special hostelry for women at Montreal. The Churches, moreover, are interesting themselves to good purpose in girls travelling or settling away from home.

The United States.

The United States presents several features of special interest in regard to the traffic in women, by reason not only of its vast extent but of the fact that under its federal constitution the jurisdiction over offences against morals resides almost entirely with the forty-eight different States, and not with the Federal Government. The chief Federal enactment is the Mann Law of 1910 on the White Slave Traffic, which imposes penalties for the offence not merely of bringing a woman or girl into the country from abroad for immoral purposes, but also of taking her from one State to another for the same ends. This, it may be observed, covers theoretically cases of a man spending a week-end

with a woman not his wife in a State not her own, though in point of fact proceedings are rarely taken under such circumstances, unless it appears that some commercial element enters in or that the girl is under age. Prosecutions under this law are taken by the Federal authorities, but apart from that all administration in this domain is in the hands of the individual States.

Since there is no system of State regulation and no registration of prostitutes in the United States it is more difficult than in many other countries to form definite conclusions as to the number of foreign women practising prostitution. Speaking generally, the situation in the older and more settled parts of the country is satisfactory, but the same cannot be said of the frontier regions or recently developed industrial districts, which have attracted large numbers of unmarried men.

As things stand, the only data by which to estimate the number of foreign women among the prostitutes of a city like New York are the records of convictions for various offences connected with the practice of prostitution. From these it appears on the face of it that the proportion of foreign prostitutes is about 25 per cent., but enquiries conducted by the police over a period of two months go to show that the figure should be about

37 rather than 25, many of the women concealing their origin through fear of expulsion. About 30 per cent. of these are from Great Britain, Ireland and Canada. There are practically no convictions of women under age, and most of those convicted have been in the country many years, which does not suggest that they came to America for purposes of prostitution.

One or two bad cases, of course, come to light from time to time, but in the main the administration of the law in the different States is too strict to make it possible for a woman to be placed anywhere in a town for purposes of prostitution with any prospect of being able to carry on the profession undisturbed sufficiently long to pay the traffickers for the cost of her transport thither.

If there were any strong inducements to stimulate an import traffic it would be difficult to keep such traffic in check in view of the length of the frontiers between the United States and Canada and the United States and Mexico respectively There are of course also the Atlantic and Pacific coast frontiers, but with one exception to be mentioned later, there is no traffic of any consequence by these routes. Nevertheless, the need for constant vigilance is demonstrated by such singularly flagrant examples of the internal traffic

as the case of a man referred to as C., who got three years' imprisonment for introducing Chinese to a girl called A.J. for immoral purposes. He had found her working in a café. He took her to Boston (Massachusetts), promising to find her a better place there, and then compelled her to solicit in the streets and hand him over her earnings. Then they went back to New York, and from there to Providence (Rhode Island). The man went into Armenian cafés and arranged for the woman to receive men. She charged the customers brought in by C. $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 dollars, and gave him all the money she made. He also arranged for her to prostitute herself to Chinese and Turks.

The difficulty of the situation is graphically demonstrated by a public declaration made by the Secretary for Labour in the United States Cabinet to the effect that clandestine immigration into the country reaches the figure of 1,000 persons per day, which is roughly equal to the number admitted legally. It would be astonishing if among these clandestine entrants there were not a certain proportion of prostitutes either coming in voluntarily or brought in by souteneurs.

In point of fact, however, anything in the nature of traffic in women across the land frontiers appears to be rare. Evidence on such a point is

naturally hard to accumulate, but importance attaches to such a remark as that made to an investigator by a souteneur in Detroit, which is close to the Canadian frontier, and where there is a great deal of prostitution. "There ain't many Canadians round the city. You might find a few, and a few Germans and Poles and Spaniards as well, but they are all old-timers." As far as the southern frontier is concerned, it is observed that foreign women will not usually put up with the hardships of a secret journey on small boats from Cuba or across the desert stretches of the Mexican frontier with the depressing prospect of prison or deportation before them, when they could easily earn more money elsewhere. One souteneur remarked with feeling, "You know as well as I do it's the hardest thing in the world for anybody to get into the United States now, and once they are in, where the devil are they going to work? I can show you places where swell joints opened up, and inside of a week they got hocked (raided). Tell me, who the devil is going to take a chance and spend money bringing something (*i.e.*, girls) over here when things are like that?"

While there is no doubt a certain infiltration of women northwards across the Mexican frontier, by

far the greater part of the prostitution prevailing in that region takes place on the Mexican side, American citizens frequenting various Mexican frontier resorts in considerable numbers, as the report on conditions in Mexico itself indicates. A much more remarkable example of traffic is found sporadically on the Pacific coast, consisting of what is nothing less than the purchase of Chinese girls in China and their transport, not as white slaves but yellow slaves, to San Francisco and other Californian towns. The same practice prevailed in Western Canada till the police succeeded in breaking up the Chinese secret societies ("tongs"), on which the traffic largely depended.

In San Francisco and other American cities the tongs appear still to exist, and the immigration officials find this particular abuse hard to cope with, because the girls in question — some of them as young as ten or a little more—are brought in as alleged members of the families of Chinese who are themselves American citizens. A case is cited of a number of such girls described frankly as " young Chinese slave girls," discovered in the course of a prohibition police raid in a set of frontier apartments at Fresno, in California. One of them was taken to the Chinese Mission, and it was found

that she had been bought from her mother at Hongkong for 40 Mexican dollars by a Chinese, who took her to America as his wife. He then handed her over to a woman, who took her to a hotel and compelled her to practise prostitution. The woman said she had paid 500 dollars to the girl's Chinese purchaser for going to China and bringing her into America. Her adventures then took a startling turn. Under threat of death she succeeded somehow in borrowing money to redeem herself from exploitation by her purchaser, who is described as "H.Y." Strangely enough she succeeded in extracting from him a receipt for the money, and it was found on her when she reached the Chinese Mission. It may be translated as follows :—

"I, H.Y., write this receipt to B.L. The said B.L. is my good friend, and now B.L. wants her freedom. She agrees to give 1,000 dollars to H.Y.'s own hand. As soon as he receives this sum H.Y. will release B.L., and H.Y. cannot go after her to demand more money or to molest her in any way at all. Even in case B.L. earns more than 1,000 dollars, H.Y. will not be entitled to demand from her more than has been agreed. Fearing that a

verbal declaration may be insufficient, this receipt is given as evidence.

Signed by H.Y.'s own hand,
Witness W.W.S.·
12th year of the Chinese Republic, 8th day of the 11th month."

As a climax, H.Y., accompanied by his lawyer, presented himself at the Mission and asked to see "his wife." The lawyer was informed of the facts and told that H.Y. already had a wife in China. After that he disappeared.

Another case was brought to light in which a Chinese brought two Chinese girls of sixteen from Vancouver and sold one of them at San Francisco for the sum of 4,500 dollars under a contract whereby the girl in question was to emancipate herself from her new owner by paying him thirteen dollars a day for four years, after which she would be free. After conforming to the terms of this contract for two months the girl was rescued by the police and handed over to the Chinese Mission. The original trafficker was sentenced to four years' imprisonment and a fine of 2,500 dollars.

As to export traffic from the United States, it exists—so far as it exists at all—across the Mexican

frontier. Speaking generally, there appears to be no restriction on the issue of passports to American citizens, and girls and young women can leave the country as they choose, except in the case of unmarried minors, who must produce a written authority from their parents or guardians. No enquiry is made into contracts of engagement abroad. Regarding the Mexican frontier, in the great majority of cases women migrating from the United States are professional prostitutes, though some cases come to light of inexperienced girls betrayed and placed in houses of prostitution without realising the lot that awaited them. As usual, engagements in cabarets or night clubs, whether in Mexico or the Canal zone of Panama, are almost inevitably fatal to the girls who accept them, for most of these cabarets are in reality simply places of assignation and prostitution.

So far as there exists in such places a demand for American girls there appears to be no difficulty in supplying it. The investigator, having heard in Panama of a so-called theatrical agency in New York which supplied girls as required, posed as the proprietor of a cabaret about to be opened in Panama, and asked the theatrical agent whether he could supply a staff. " Certainly," he replied,

" I have sent 300 down there, and I know exactly what you want. You don't want innocents and you don't want prostitutes, but you want girls you could call a happy medium. If you had been here five minutes ago you would have seen the swellest flock of blondes you ever saw. In the next room is a guy who is taking them to [X. 817] in Panama to-morrow." Asked whether there would be no difficulty about their getting into Panama he said, " None." Their contracts were in order, their return tickets were paid ; nothing more was required. " All I ask," he added, " is a couple of weeks' notice. Come back in a fortnight and I'll have them here and you can pick 'em out yourself." That this is not an isolated case is shown by the remark made to an investigator by a madame at Havana (Cuba). She said she had in her house three American girls and three English, and that if she ever wanted more Americans she wrote to friends in the town of D. in the United States, and they sent her as many as she asked for. She paid the girls' travelling expenses, but they had to repay her out of their earnings.

Two opinions expressed regarding prostitution in the United States throw an instructive light on the conditions governing prostitution generally. One explains something of the causes which drive

girls to this form of livelihood. A waiter in a New York restaurant with a long experience of the underworld said, "They don't come here with the idea of taking to prostitution. But things go wrong. Their husbands desert them or they are caught having a good time, and then they become regulars.

The other view was voiced by a disgusted souteneur who was enlarging on the impossibility of doing any successful business in the States. "Do you think it's easy to get into the United States?" he asked. "I've been waiting five years to bring my niece in, and she can't get within the quota. So how are prostitutes to get in? There's no houses of prostitution here any more. What chance has a foreign girl, who can't speak the language, on the streets or anywhere except in a house? In South America everything's fine. The houses are open. No one asks any questions. The girl earns her 4 or 5 pesos, the man goes out, another one comes in. But here there's simply nothing doing." It would be hard to find better evidence of the inseparable connection between the licensed house system and the traffic.

But in spite of the inevitable existence of occasional examples of the traffic in women it is clear that the United States has achieved an astonishing

success in its endeavours to repress the evil. That is the more remarkable in view of the vast extent of its frontiers and the fact that jurisdiction in such matters is divided between the Federal Government and the States.

CHAPTER X

LATIN AMERICA

LATIN AMERICA is the traffic market of the world, with Buenos Ayres and Rio de Janeiro, the capitals of the Argentine Republic and Brazil respectively, rivalling one another for pre-eminence. The salient characteristic of most of the countries in this group is the lowness of the general moral standard in sexual matters. In that regard one sentence deleted from the report on a particular country is undoubtedly of wider application : " Young men have been taught for generations past to look on prostitutes and houses of prostitution as constituting an essential element in the social life of every community." Among particular features in the different countries will be noted the perpetual influx of Americans across the Mexican border for purposes of sexual indulgence ; the successful efforts made by Cuba in 1926 and subsequent years to break the back of the traffic and get the whole business of prostitution under control ; the special problems

arising at Panama out of divided authority and the demand created by the periodical advent of the crews of American warships ; the prominent part played in Brazil by " kept women," the mistresses of individual rich men, as distinct from prostitutes ; and various peculiar forms of demoralisation in the Argentine.

Mexico.

Not much in the way of the control of prostitution could be expected of a country as disturbed politically as Mexico has been for the last fifteen years. It is surprising, indeed, that things should not be more anarchic than they actually are. Mexico, moreover, is bound by no international obligations on the subject, for she is not a member of the League of Nations and has signed none of the agreements of 1904, 1910 and 1921. Prostitution is, of course, not a misdemeanour, and no cognisance is taken of souteneurs as such.

The situation as regards the traffic demands attention in two separate aspects. There is the question of foreign women in the ordinary brothels in the principal cities, and there are the special conditions prevailing near the United States' border, where studied provision is made for periodic influxes of American visitors. The houses of

prostitution in places like Mexico City are of several different types. There are the best class, where the girls live and have their separate rooms; there are a lower class where they do not live, but can bring their clients for assignations ; there are low hotels which let rooms for immoral purposes ; and there are one-roomed hovels used by one or two women. Foreign women prefer this last type. At Tampico the investigators found the women working in little wooden huts, each holding from one or two to half-a-dozen girls. The doors were wide open, and the women were sitting as close to them as they could without getting wet, for it was raining hard.

Prostitutes are registered, and in theory cannot be inscribed if they are under 18. It appears, however, that any age they give is accepted without enquiry, so that many girls of 17 or less are found in the houses. The investigator succeeded in getting access to a rendezvous resorted to regularly by souteneurs and prostitutes. It is on the first floor of a certain house, and rigorous secrecy is observed concerning it. It is run by a Russian, and only persons well known or whose bona fides is guaranteed can get in. Foreign souteneurs, traffickers, madames and prostitutes of many nationalities were found there. One souteneur

observed, "Business is quiet for the moment, but that won't last. When political troubles (meaning apparently the contest between the Government and the Roman Catholic Church) are over things will look up again," while another threw light on the seasonal character of the demand by remarking that "for the moment business is bad. We are losing money. The Mexicans aren't spending anything. But after January the tourists will begin to turn up, and we shall start a good year again."

The Mexican authorities were disposed to claim that an immigration law passed in the early part of 1926 had been of considerable value in making the exclusion of undesirables possible, but souteneurs themselves were contemptuous of the new regulations. "Aren't 'boys' and women coming in every day?" one of them asked. "That shows you, doesn't it? No doubt it's a bit more difficult, but all the same no one will stop you here. The law has been passed nearly a year, and I wish someone would give me a hundred pesos for every souteneur and prostitute who has come in since then." The surprising feature of the registration of foreign prostitutes in Mexico is the rarity of Spanish women, though Spanish is the language of the country. The nationalities that predomin-

ate are French, German and Polish, and it is clear that most of the foreign women take to the life almost immediately on entering the country, for a large proportion of them cannot speak Spanish at all.

Close to the American frontier there is a quite definite traffic. A little Mexican town, for example, called Tia Juana, about 18 miles from San Diego in South California, lays itself out to attract American visitors by horse-racing, games of chance, prostitution and alcohol. Many of the girls who supply the demand thus created are themselves American, and cross the border for the season. By no means all of these are brought by souteneurs. They ply their trade in little huts constructed for the purpose. A glimpse of the life characteristic of this township is given in the picture of a woman spoken of as Gloria, one of the " commission girls," so called because they serve in the bars and get a commission of 40 per cent. on all liquor sold. Gloria wore a wedding ring as a measure of protection, and " let customers kiss her, but nothing more." A girl named Ida, encountered at Mexicali, imposed no such limits. She was an American of 25 who had come to Mexicali from Salt Lake City when the licensed houses there were closed, and worked as prostitute

in one of the huts reserved for the purpose. She said she had come of her own accord ; Mexicali was a terrible place, but she earned a lot of money there—more than a hundred men a week at 3 dollars each. Most of the customers were Chinese.

The pathos as well as the iniquity of the corruption of children stands out in one entry in the investigator's report. " In another house visited," he writes, " an assistant madame was called, an American woman of about 40. She said she had a little girl just the style I would like to meet. Presently a little half-Indian girl was ushered into the room. She was quiet, very timid, and seemed not more than 14 or 15. She was dressed in green silk crêpe, with a large Spanish comb in her hair. She came over and sat down, after greeting me in a frightened little voice. It was evident the child had not been in the life long. The madame explained that she was a new girl, and added, ' Yes, she's awfully young, but that's the way they are here.' "

Money will evidently do a good deal in Mexico, as it will in most places, for a souteneur observed that, while a girl could not easily enter the country alone, it was never very difficult to arrange with someone to bring her in. It might cost a few pesos, but what was that ? In Mexico City the

investigator found that whenever a house with several French girls in it was opened, the police closed it unless the madame and the inmates put up a handsome sum for the privilege of being left alone ; and that was not very satisfactory, because the police were always changing.

With Mexico still in a state of political ferment little improvement in social conditions can be expected at present. The most that could be achieved would be some improvement in the border region, and that can be effected only by increased vigilance on the part of the American authorities, who do almost everything possible as it is.

Cuba.

Chequered as Cuba's political experience has been, the island has a notable record in regard to the White Slave Traffic, for it has given more convincing proof than any other country of the effect of resolute legislative and administrative action in limiting and diminishing the evils of the traffic. The League's investigators visited Cuba twice—once in 1924 before the reforms had been carried out, and once in 1926 afterwards. They were therefore in a position to judge by ocular evidence of the effects of the changes, and in this

case, as in so many others, they obtained still more decisive testimony from denizens of the underworld themselves.

Cuba has, in fact, gone through two phases of reform. In 1913 the special vice districts were abolished. A report from the Cuban Government speaks strongly of the effect of the existence of these districts. "The authorised district," says the report, "did not prevent the existence outside its radius of as many houses of prostitution as inside, a fact which proves its complete uselessness. It was nothing but a sink of iniquity and perversion in which were imprisoned unhappy women whom this existence of misery, of shame and of vice converted into beings without will and without conscience. Shut up in houses of prostitution, selling their bodies, they became the victims of a traffic which adds tragic pages to the history of human misery. They fell into the clutches of blackguards who exploited them infamously, compelling them to pay for their wretched lodging and their meagre pittance exorbitant prices which sometimes exceeded the profits of their vile profession."

The decree of 1913 abolishing the red light districts seems, however, to have had little effect, for in 1924 the investigators found Havana, the capital of Cuba, full of foreign prostitutes and

souteneurs. The women carried on their profession in houses well-known, often luxurious and conducted without scandal, scattered over the whole town. The souteneurs lived openly in idleness on the proceeds of the women's trade, and from time to time they imported fresh women without fear of discovery or interference by the authorities, who declared themselves helpless owing to the inadequacy of the laws. All the police did, in fact, was to prevent solicitation in the streets and the introduction of girls under 21 into licensed houses.

Such were the conditions prevailing when the first investigation was made in 1924. The second visit two years later showed that a decree of 1925 had had very different effects from its predecessor of 1913. It had a twofold purpose—to stamp out the evil and to assist prostitutes willing to abandon the profession to redeem their past. The decree based itself on the League of Nations Convention of 1921. It imposed far more severe penalties on anyone inducing a woman to follow a life of prostitution or paying for a house occupied by a woman for that purpose, and it gave to the port authorities wide powers of exclusion and to the authorities within the island equally wide powers of expulsion. The first result was the reduction in the number of

known licensed houses from 477 to 224, and it is mentioned in that connection that a number of the women had abandoned the profession altogether. Much more valuable, however, than the investigators' own version of what had happened is the observation made to one of them by a trafficker in October, 1926. " I meant," he said, " to go back to the places I used to know, but I found the houses were vacated by their tenants and occupied by respectable Cuban families. I spoke to a number of people I didn't know who were living in the quarter. They told me that these houses had been closed since 1925, and that their tenants and inmates had gone off to Mexico." A local taxi-driver proved eloquent on the same subject, particularly in regard to the action taken by the police against foreign women. " You should have seen the district in 1925," he exclaimed, " they arrested them by hundreds ; the papers were full of it every day. Now you won't see a souteneur in the neighbourhood. They have all gone too. We were all certain this couldn't last, but you can see for yourself that it has lasted for more than a year. You have seen to-day's paper—six more expulsions, and it's been going on like that for a twelvemonth." " Six," interjected the investigator, " is not many out of the crowd there are here." " But

you don't think these people are fools?" was the reply. "They don't wait to be expelled. They clear off first."

It is not claimed that these measures, valuable and effective as they are, have completely ended the import traffic. At the beginning of 1925, out of 700 women practising prostitution in Havana, 469, or 67 per cent., were foreigners. These are Government figures, but they undoubtedly represent a considerable understatement, for the investigators saw at least 2,000 women in the houses in August and September, 1924. However that may be, it is clear that the decree of 1925 had considerable effect, for between the actual expulsions and the voluntary exodus to which the action of the authorities gave rise over 500 women and souteneurs left Havana within a few months. Mention is made of an individual labelled 157P, and described as the king of the souteneurs, who had six women working for him. He was got rid of in the first group expelled.

The need for such measures is demonstrated by certain conversations showing the facility with which women could be recruited even in a country like Cuba without land frontiers. The law against the employment of minors tends to be comparatively ineffective here as elsewhere, as every girl

under age invariably had a false passport showing her to be seven or eight years older than she really was. Often enough, however, a casual question put unexpectedly as to the date of her birth revealed the facts. In Cuba, moreover, as elsewhere, the peril of the ordinary concert girl's life is convincingly demonstrated, one madame, for example, mentioning to the investigator that she imported no girls for her house because, as she said, " You see, opera and café-concert companies are passing through here all the time. The girls get hard up, so they seek me out and ask to be admitted to my house."

But it must be repeated, the salient fact about Cuba is not the conditions as they were, but the changes that have made the conditions what they are.

The investigators are no doubt justified in closing their report on the island with the observation that the measures the Government has adopted have dealt a severe blow at the traffic not only in Cuba itself but indirectly in quite distant countries, for the ramifications of the underworld stretch far, and it means a good deal for the export countries in Europe to know that there is no longer a market for their unhappy merchandise in Cuba.

Panama.

It is difficult to suppose that Panama is of much importance in connection with the White Slave Traffic or anything else, except, of course, its canal. In point of fact the unique conditions prevailing in this region give the report of the investigators a special interest, and the volume of shipping passing through the Canal finds a reflection in the volume of prostitution prevailing in that region. The best proof of that is the description of the scenes witnessed on the arrival of an American man-of-war, which runs as follows: "An American battleship anchored at Balboa. The crew were given shore leave and the licensed houses were not placed out of bounds. The result was that certain streets (named) were crowded with American sailors and marines, who were seen to enter and leave the resorts. Prostitutes from other sections of the city rented temporary rooms to meet the demand. These conditions apparently prevail whenever a battleship passes through the canal."

The souteneurs, needless to say, are alive to the possibilities of such an event. "Strike out for Panama," urged one of them in Paris. "The fleet's expected there during January and February. Business will be booming at Panama and Colon."

Another added, "I was there myself last year when the fleet was there. I picked up 4,000 dollars (£800) in a few months."

What makes the situation at Panama so difficult from an administrative point of view is that a band of territory ten miles wide, through which the Canal runs, is directly under the jurisdiction of the United States, with the exception of two towns at each end of the strip, Panama and Colon, which, like the rest of the country, are under the Panama Government. This division of authority is exploited by the traffickers and their victims, and there is some evidence that the Panamese officials are a good deal less than enthusiastic in the discharge of their duties, for while the United States port officer in the Canal zone excluded or expelled in twelve months 38 undesirables, male and female, he was pointedly reminded by the Panama authorities that his business was simply with health, not with morals.

There is no doubt that the United States officials do in fact attempt to stamp out the traffic, but incoming souteneurs and prostitutes have devised a way of establishing themselves in Panama without touching the Canal zone. There are not in the chief cities, Panama and Colon, any large houses of prostitution. The profession is carried on in

little wooden cabins with one or two unsavoury rooms. American troops stationed in the zone are not allowed to resort to these places, but there is no restriction on the movements of sailors and marines on warships visiting the zone, and incidents already described show how extensive a use is made of this freedom.

Out of 600 registered prostitutes in Colon and Panama there are 250 foreigners, mostly, it would appear, French, Italian and Polish, together with some from the United States.

One café-proprietor said he had eight girls in his establishment, sent by a theatrical agency in New York. They all practised prostitution ; if they did not he would not engage them. The only thing was that they must not take their clients upstairs. If they did he would be suspected of encouraging the traffic. " I could let you a room with a woman," he explained, " so long as it was not one of the girls who sing in my café. My girls usually slip over to the hotel attached to the café 11X, and the 11X girls come here." The speaker's scruples or misgivings were thus little real impediment to business. One of the girls themselves added a little further information. She explained that she could not leave the café till closing time, but that she could

hire a room at " 13X." Her price for all night was 20 dollars.

Everything connected with places of entertainment in Panama seems to be unsatisfactory in the last degree. As in some other countries, the singing and dancing girls in certain cabarets have to be registered with the police and undergo periodical medical examinations for venereal disease. (Ordinary registered prostitutes have to pass the doctor twice a week and pay a dollar (4s.) a time). In other and superior cafés the girls, being Americans, escape this regulation, but it is taken for granted that most of them are clandestine prostitutes. Many of these girls were in the first instance trapped, as it were, into prostitution. One of them explained how she had hated the life at Panama, but she could not get away because girls were only given their return ticket when their engagement ended. So she decided to wait for her first pay-day, but the money was not enough. But gradually she got used to the life, and ended by signing on voluntarily for a new engagement.

There is plenty of evidence of the inward traffic, and some of the women are said to be sufficiently experienced to provide themselves with three or four passports—for example, Argentine,

Brazilian, Spanish and French. One story will serve as sample of many others. It concerns a French girl brought in by a souteneur who was arrested (by the American authorities in the Canal zone, not the Panamese) and sentenced to five years' imprisonment and a fine. The girl was visited by one of the investigators in a hospital where she was being treated for venereal disease. "I was born at Paris," she said, "and I am 21 now. My mother died when I was 15 and the next year my father married again. Then I left home. I went to work and I lived in a boarding-house with one of my friends. There I met a man, to whom I got engaged, and we were just going to be married when he got killed. Later on I often used to walk out with a friend, and one night we met two men who walked with us and asked us if we wouldn't like to go to Havana. We agreed, and when we went on the ship we met another man and two other girls. At Havana the two men we knew took off the other girls and the other man brought us on to Panama. It was only when we got on board that I found we were bound for a house of prostitution at Colon." The girl added that the souteneur had taught her various depraved practices and carefully schooled her in the methods of the profession at Colon.

After mentioning that the Panama authorities claim to be without the necessary funds to establish an effective immigration surveillance system, the investigators conclude that there does exist at Panama a certain import traffic seasonal in character. Of an export traffic there is no evidence, nor indeed would one expect it from so small an area.

Brazil.

In Brazil, which is Portuguese in origin, the rest of Latin America being Spanish, prostitution is carried on without let or hindrance, and traffic exists on a substantial scale. That is not due to defects in legislation. Brazil has ratified the international agreements of 1904, 1910 and 1925, and it seems clear that the laws on the statute-book are adequate. The administration, however, is a good deal less efficient than it might be. The police, for example, are supposed to prevent solicitation in the streets, but the girls are said to snap their fingers at them, and boasted openly that they could do that because they paid a certain number of them a weekly retainer. The total lack of rescue homes or anything analogous is cited as making the task of the police the more difficult.

The " red-light " areas are found all over the

capital city, Rio de Janeiro, in the well-to-do districts as well as in the poorer. There is no regulation requiring that the houses shall be grouped together, but in fact they usually are. Technically no one, either woman or man, may conduct a house of prostitution for profit, but there is nothing to prevent a woman from keeping a boarding-house for prostitutes and charging them what she likes for board and lodgings, so long as she is not paid a fixed percentage of their earnings. The real owners of the houses are commonly souteneurs. A graphic description of one of these areas is given by the investigator.

" Prostitutes," he says, " may be seen standing in the windows and doorways of their cribs, clad in loose-fitting garments and short dresses, with arms and legs exposed, calling loudly to the passers-by. The houses are extremely insanitary, and in most cases have little or no privacy. All day and all night hundreds of young and old men can be seen passing through the streets entering and leaving the houses—soldiers and sailors of all nationalities are always visible. In fact souteneurs usually meet the incoming steamers, warships and so forth, and direct the unacquainted to the district. In each house or crib the prostitutes offer intoxicating liquor for sale at prices slightly higher than else-

where. The women are the most depraved that can be imagined."

Though nominally no girl under 21 can be inscribed as inmate of a house where prostitution is known to take place, there appears to be no difficulty in enrolling children of 15 and 16. They simply tell the police they are 22 and no questions are asked. The investigator tells of one actual case in which he was taken in to two minors, one of 15, one of 16, who had just been established in a certain town. The madame explained that they had been turned out of their homes. One was married, but her husband put her out of doors because she had bobbed her hair. Both were Brazilians and looked very young. The investigator was then introduced to them and invited to choose one. Both named one dollar as their price. Another case was that of a girl of 19 who went from Cuba to Buenos Ayres with a Spanish theatrical company. There she fell in with a man who kept her for a month and then disappeared. After that she met a souteneur who took her to Rio and "set her up in business." She professed never to have practised prostitution before then.

There is practically no export traffic from Brazil, but the import traffic is as heavy as in the Argentine. The Brazilian Government, in reply to the

League's questionnaire, mentioned that there were certain houses in which all the inmates were European, but that even apart from these the proportion of foreign women employed in the ordinary houses was as high as 80 per cent. One practice apparently peculiar to Rio de Janeiro is reported. The city is a recognised " market " for girls whom rich men seek as their mistresses. Many foreign girls are definitely brought from Europe for that purpose. One souteneur declared indeed that there were more kept women in Rio than prostitutes.

A good deal of information is available as to the way this kind of connection is arranged. When a good-looking girl gets to Rio she is taken at once by the man who brought her from Europe into a well-known hotel bar, and as a rule some habitué of the place takes a fancy to her and undertakes to support her. Other girls, " too young to waste their time in the licensed houses," are put on show in gaming-houses for the same purpose. One madame explained the whole system at length. " If a girl is young," she said, " or looks young, I can always put her in touch with a rich man. She can live here with me and the man pays all expenses. I have asked X (her partner) to bring her niece, who is less than 20 and a widow, from Warsaw. She can leave her baby in Poland, and if she comes

here we can do something for her. I know plenty of rich men who are always ready to look at good offers. When I tell you I can place girls well, so that their future is assured, you can take it from me I mean what I say." The girl's aunt, questioned about the affair a little later, said she was fixing it all up. "She's very poor, and I have got a rich man here for her. I know his tastes, and he'll look after her. I wish I had a contos (100 dollars) for every girl I've made a lady of. She'll be better off here. What would happen to her if she got married? Marry a beggar in Warsaw!"

The business of importing women from Europe clearly presents no serious difficulties. Some come in as the actual or pretended wives of the souteneurs. An investigator asked one house-owner how he got his women. "That's the last thing we have to trouble about," he answered. "If we had sixty rooms in this house we could get more women than we wanted. They're coming all the time. You know that they're dying of starvation in Europe. A girl can make money here. This isn't like Buenos Ayres or Montevideo, where they only get half of their earnings. Here they keep the lot." To the pertinent question as to how they could find money for the journey if they were dying of starvation the answer was returned that

their friends already in Brazil sent them the cost of the fare, to be repaid out of the newcomers' earnings. Poland in particular is quoted as a source of steady supply. "Have you ever been in Poland or Russia?" asked a souteneur. "Well, go into any 'house' in those countries and ask a woman if she'd like to come here, and you'll never get rid of her." An employé in a cable company confirmed these stories to the full, mentioning that prostitutes in Rio were constantly cabling to their friends in France or Poland urging them to come to Brazil.

The investigators close their report with the familiar sentence recurring in one form or another in the discussion of almost every country where the licensed house system still survives. "In Brazil, as elsewhere," they state, "traffic in women is carried on, and this traffic is maintained by the houses of prostitution." That cause and effect are inseparable.

Uruguay.

Uruguay is a well-governed country, though few people in Europe know much about it, and it might be expected to show a cleaner sheet in the matter of the traffic in women than some of its Latin-American neighbours. That, in fact, is the

case. There is, of course, room for plenty of improvement, as the Government of the country itself realises, but as things are to-day more diligent and more successful attempts are made to keep the traffic in check than appears to be the case in Brazil or the Argentine. Uruguay has ratified all the three international conventions.

Registration of prostitutes and licensing of houses exists.* The women must be over 21, and there is considerable risk attaching to breach of that regulation, though a few madames said they would take girls under age provided they had false birth certificates or false passports. Several such cases were encountered. Many of the houses belong to a notorious character referred to as 1-T, who has been convicted for trafficking but escaped from justice, and being still at large has some secret place of assignation where madames and souteneurs come and settle their debts to him. This individual is one of some 1,300 actual or presumed souteneurs whose photographs and fingerprints the police possess.

There exists a law against procuration, and at the time of the visit of the investigators new legislation had just been introduced providing for the expulsion of foreign procurers and the closing of

* But see pages 214, 215.

the licensed houses. On that point the President of the Republic, in introducing a Bill on the subject, made a notable speech. "These houses of prostitution," he said, "need procurers, since vice demands a perpetual supply of victims, and the existence of this class of person is justified while the law tolerates these establishments and even regularises them, since they operate under official supervision. The keeper of a brothel or similar establishment, notwithstanding the regrettable tolerance with which he is viewed by the public authorities, is just as much a procurer as the trafficker who sells him the pitiable merchandise he has brought from foreign lands, or as the local souteneur who hands over the woman he has violated or seduced to be exploited for their common benefit. . . . Regulation turns the keeper of a brothel into little less than an official. It allows him to benefit by the appearance of a moral guarantee and an equally illusory hygienic guarantee at the cost of the liberty of the prostitutes in order to exploit the needs, the vice and the moral perversion of men by letting out women."

These are strong words, but they resulted in stronger laws, and in particular in the abolition of licensed houses. That, however, is primarily an internal matter. As regards export and import

traffic it would appear that the former is inconsiderable. There is one spot where the frontier between Uruguay and the Argentine can be crossed without difficulty, and a good many women use that route. But many of these would seem to be merely in transit through Uruguay, having landed at its capital, Montevideo, instead of going direct to Buenos Ayres. The number of Uruguayan prostitutes in Brazil and the Argentine is small.

There is undoubtedly an import traffic of some volume into Uruguay. A certain number of women are simply passing through to the Argentine, but in the houses in Montevideo itself the demand for foreign women is strong, and where there is a demand the supply does not fail. The records show, to take a single year, that of 227 prostitutes newly inscribed in 1923, 96 were foreigners, 60 of the 96 being Europeans and 38 of the 60 French. The proportion of foreign women rose from 24 per cent. in 1919 to 42 per cent. in 1922. The evidence of prostitutes and souteneurs themselves goes to show that there is a steady stream of women coming into the country and taking immediately or almost immediately to prostitution. In this case, as in all, the presence of the souteneur in the background is invariable.

One madame encountered was perfectly explicit on that point. "In cities like Montevideo or Buenos Ayres," she said, "customers like foreign girls. The women have no money for the journey themselves, so someone must pay for them. We always send to fetch the girls, but it isn't easy, and only the ones the boss (the notorious 1-T mentioned above) knows get through. The people he's in touch with know whom to get hold of. Don't forget that he runs big risks. If the woman gets away he loses his money. If he has any doubts about her he sends a man to meet her at Rio so that she can't give him the slip. He's got friends to whom he writes, and they send the girls."

There are, of course, immigration regulations, but they are not always effective. All women or girls travelling alone, for example, are supposed to carry not only passports but certificates issued by Uruguayan consuls abroad testifying to their identity, their nationality, their age and their respectability, but a consul in a large European town admitted frankly that he gave these certificates to any adult woman who could show that she had never been convicted of a criminal offence. Corruption, moreover, is apparently not unknown, for a girl, explaining how Uruguay could be entered from Brazil by a roundabout route, men-

tioned that sometimes officials stopped you, but that a few pesos went a long way with an official who only earned 60 pesos a month all told. The same informant added significantly that the journey took five days, " but a girl can always make a bit on the way."

To sum up. So far as Uruguay is concerned, there is a definite demand for foreign girls (one madame mentioned that out of 33 women who were at a certain date in a licensed house in Europe, practically all had made their way to South America) and to supply it a constant importation service from Europe is maintained.

Uruguay, however, is one of the countries where important reforms are in progress. The League enquiry there was carried out in 1924, and it is necessary, therefore, to mention that notable changes are expected as a result of a law drafted and adopted by the Uruguayan Senate and Chamber in March, 1927, but not actually in operation when the report appeared. The first clause of this enactment gives the police wide powers. It reads as follows :

> " Any person of either sex exploiting prostitution or taking part in it under any form whatever for purposes of gain, even with the consent of the victim, shall be punishable with from

two to eight years' imprisonment. In the case of a second offence the maximum penalty shall be imposed, with hard labour."

Acting under this and other clauses of the law, in spite of the fact that it had not been actually promulgated, the police immediately expelled all known procurers in the country. They also closed all licensed houses, "artistes' boarding-houses," as they were called, and similar establishments, on the ground that the proprietors or managers of such houses came within the scope of the article of the law already quoted. This zeal seemed to have caused certain embarrassments, for the prostitutes, against whom no legal action lay, declared that even if the houses were closed they would continue to exercise their profession in one way or another. That problem was under the examination of the police at the moment the report was being drafted.

The Argentine Republic.

Investigators into commercialised vice in its most systematised and varied forms could find no more fruitful field of enquiry than the Argentine Republic, and its capital city, Buenos Ayres, in particular. So far as the League's report is concerned, a reader who concentrates first on the

European situation finds himself comprehensively familiar with general conditions in the Argentine before he turns to the pages devoted to that country at all, for it is straight to Latin America that sixty per cent. of the streams of the export traffic from Europe flow, and by far the greater number of the travellers to Latin America make first for Buenos Ayres. As a keeper of several licensed houses in Europe observed, " They will go there, as if they thought they were going to pick up gold in the streets. Out of my own house alone I've lost fifteen girls in four months. Things must be as good as they say they are, because they never come back."

There are various restrictive regulations in force, notably one which, though genuinely well-intentioned, appears to have definitely disastrous results. There can be only one licensed house in a block and only one prostitute in a house. She must be registered, and any servant she employs must be over 45 and must be registered too. This limitation, and various expenses to which the prostitute or the man for whom she is working is put in order to conform with the regulations, necessitate high earnings, and these can be readily obtained in one way, through the adoption of perverse practices as distinct from normal prosti-

tution. A woman can in this way receive, says the investigators, up to forty men a day instead of six or eight, and figures given in conversation by a souteneur more than confirm that estimate. "With a single woman," he declared, "one of my houses did an average business of 1,500 pesos a week, at 5 pesos a customer." That means, it will be observed, that the woman must have received 300 men a week. At the rate of exchange taken by the investigators there were 3 pesos to the American dollar, so that the 5 peso fee is equal to just under 7s.

A good deal is said about the cost of life in the profession at Buenos Ayres. To begin with, it is explained, the women arrive already deep in debt by reason of the loans they or their souteneurs have had to contract for the cost of the journey. Then when it is a question of renting an expensive house or of buying one and fitting it up to comply with the regulations the woman has to work very hard to make both ends meet. That is to a large extent the raison d'être for the practices mentioned above, which have one particularly demoralising aspect in that the offer by the woman of this particular form of gratification introduces it for the first time to clients who would otherwise have demanded nothing but prostitution in its normal form. But there is clearly another side to this

financial question. If certain women are hard put to it to earn a living (meaning, of course, in all cases a living for their souteneur) others make the man preying on them rapidly wealthy. An individual who financed houses in Buenos Ayres said a new one would bring in at least 1,800 pesos a week (say £120) net profit. Half of this, as a general rule, would go to the woman or her souteneur—most of it, no doubt, to the latter—and the rest fall into the lap of the financier behind the scenes.

But it is in connection not with prostitution as such, but with the actual traffic in women, that the Argentine Republic, in common with Brazil, stands out conspicuous. It is disclosed by official returns that of the prostitutes registered in the course of the three years before the investigators' visit foreign women constituted 75 per cent. of the whole, and there is no reason to believe that among the much larger number of clandestine prostitutes the proportion is lower. There is more in that fact than appears. Foreign women who take to prostitution almost immediately after reaching a country like the Argentine unquestionably came there for purposes of prostitution. Equally certainly they did not come there at their own cost, for this type of woman is not provident, and not one in ten of them would be in a position

to pay the expenses of a voyage. In other words a high percentage of foreign women among the prostitutes of any country, most of all a high percentage of European prostitutes in a Latin American country, is palpable evidence of the existence of an efficient and persistent traffic. The women's expenses are paid by the men for whom they are to work when they are established in the country of their destination.

It is a recognised fact, which may be accepted without seeking for psychological explanations of it, that the foreign woman is sought after just because she is foreign. There is a stimulus in novelty, and a French girl in Buenos Ayres will obtain far more clients than one of native birth. As a matter of fact it is from France, and next to France, Spain and Poland, that the great majority of the foreign prostitutes in the Argentine Republic come, though, as has been stated, Buenos Ayres is a kind of Mecca for the traffickers in every European country. It is only just to the Argentine authorities to emphasise the fact that they make a definite endeavour not only to exercise a reasonable control over prostitution but also to give any assistance possible to a girl prepared to abandon the life.

On paper indeed the authorities make a pretty good showing. It is true that the Argentine has

not ratified the agreement of 1904, nor that of 1910, nor that of 1921, but it would be wrong to conclude from that that the Government is completely apathetic regarding questions of public morals. There is a police convention between six Latin American countries, including the Argentine, for the exchange of information about undesirables, though it would seem that by no means the maximum use is made of it. As to the effect the various regulations have, opinions in instructed quarters differ. So far as ordinary prostitution, as distinct from traffic, goes, there seems to be little interference with women who adapt themselves to their conditions. The view of one prominent personality in the underworld at any rate was that if the woman equips herself with a souteneur to arrange things for her all goes well—a very satisfactory situation for the souteneur class generally. " I admit," he said, " that at Buenos Ayres everything seems to be in the woman's favour, but you can see for yourself that a prostitute can't do without a boy. Theoretically there are no madames, nor souteneurs, nor proprietors of assignation houses, but in practice we do what we like. A woman can't afford a house of her own to work in. Besides, you can't always find houses that comply with the regulations. The rent is high, and unless

the woman has someone to put up the money for her she can't make a start. Every woman has to have someone. Their men find the places for them and the women are quite ready to pay for that."

Despite all the authorities attempt, the considered verdict of the investigators is given in these words, " There exists a régime of prostitution regulated and recognised. There has recently been an increase in the number of houses of prostitution and of registered prostitutes. Foreign women form a high percentage of the prostitutes. And there exists a group of denizens of the underworld who help the prostitutes financially and in other ways, and live with impunity on the earnings of their victims." This judgment is based on experience acquired at Buenos Ayres. On conditions elsewhere the investigators make no observations. In its comments on the Report the Argentine Government claims that Buenos Ayres is " a hard-working commercial city with a healthy population and an index of morality far superior to that of much older cities with a more homogeneous population and more satisfactory legislation." It observes, moreover, that " Prostitution in Buenos Ayres *is proportionate to the quantity and nature of the population*, which contains an enormous percentage of foreigners as well as bachelors, who, owing to

their recent arrival in the country, have no established position. They are consequently unable to marry and so settle down until they possess relative economic independence."

When it comes to the actual traffic official supervision seems to be fairly effective, though there is some difference of opinion about that. A serious attempt is made to keep out foreign prostitutes. A certain number are turned back from the docks, the shipping companies being compelled to take them back to their destinations, depositing at Buenos Ayres a sum of money which is not refunded till the Argentine Government learns from its consul in the country of the girl's origin that she has duly arrived. Girls coming to the Argentine to marry are not allowed to leave the dock district till the police have satisfied themselves as to the bona fides of the future husband. In the case of foreign girls coming to work the same course is followed till the necessary enquiries have been made.

Conditions on the land frontier are more difficult. There is a recognised route across the Uruguay River, which separates Uruguay from the Argentine, with boats and hotels to cater for it, and there seems little doubt that the authorities in the neighbourhood connive to some extent.

One difficulty about any official attempt to help the prostitute—and this, of course, is true of the problem in all countries—is that she is notoriously incapable of helping herself.

How far women coming into the country are brought without knowledge of what awaits them is difficult to gauge, but there must be many cases like, for example, that of a man who went to Warsaw, married a girl there, brought her back to Buenos Ayres, and put her in a house of prostitution. In two years he had been able to save nearly 3,000 American dollars (£600). The girl was said to have decided "to listen to reason," rather than find herself destitute, when she found she could not get back to Poland. She herself said her parents believed her to be happily settled as a respectable married woman. She sent them small sums every month.

The general conclusion emerging is that Argentina is largely a paradise for souteneurs. The business is unconcealed, and the persons engaged in it spoke with perfect frankness to the investigators. "I've got several houses," one of them said, "and I have bought them all. In each house my tenant is a prostitute, and she pays me half of what she earns. That's for the rent. I put someone in to run every house. Sometimes

it's my wife. In any case it's someone I can trust." The same information mentioned that the souteneurs protected themselves by making the woman pay over 1,000 pesos (say £70) in advance as caution-money and also getting her signature to a blank legal document on stamped paper which they could fill up subsequently as they chose, to meet any emergency. The keepers of houses have formed themselves into a kind of club to defend their interests. Of its president it is observed that "he possesses a long and varied experience of prostitution in many countries." The members of the club regard the women simply as articles of commerce. There is an elaborate organisation of manageresses of houses, agents, go-betweens and notaries. The richer members lend to the others, not merely for the fitting-up of houses, but to finance distant journeys to distant countries in search of women. The evidence amassed reveals 'a complex organisation for the commerical exploitation of prostitution and the procuration of girls for the substantial profit of third parties." Once more it is demonstrated that on the existence and activity—and, it may be added, the financial interest—of the third party the whole movement of women from one country to another for purposes of prostitution rests.

Part III

FIGHTING THE TRAFFIC

CHAPTER X

INTERNATIONAL ACTION

The detailed reports on the twenty-eight countries so far investigated show clearly the nature of the evil to be combated. It has been seen that reasonably full provision for national action and international co-operation was made in the Agreements of 1904 and 1910 and the Convention of 1921, the latter embracing the provisions of the two former in that its first article laid it down that the Agreements of 1904 and 1910 should forthwith be ratified by any signatories which had so far not taken that step. When the first report of the Body of Experts was issued in March, 1927, 32 countries were parties to the 1921 Convention, but it is to be noted that among those which had either not signed or having signed had not ratified were countries like Brazil, the Argentine Republic, Egypt and Turkey, where the traffic has been shown to be of serious dimensions. The United States, while fully in agreement with the principles of the Convention, has not signed it owing to the

technical difficulty the central Government has in pledging itself to certain administrative measures which under the United States Constitution fall within the competence of the individual States. It may be observed in this connection that Switzerland, also living under a federal Government, has not found this particular difficulty insuperable.

It is important to form a correct judgment, not merely on the adequacy or otherwise of the existing international Agreements, but on the efficiency with which the undertakings they embody are being honoured by the States which have signed them. The need for new Agreements cannot be properly estimated till existing ones are working as they should work.

The Body of Experts has reviewed the general situation in different countries as seen through the eyes of the investigators. To begin with, there is the question of the establishment (in accordance with the Agreement of 1904) in each country of a central authority to co-ordinate all information regarding the procuring of women or girls for immoral purposes abroad and to correspond with similar authorities in other States so as to provide for active collaboration where necessary. It appears that in most cases such central authorities have been appointed (in Great Britain the authority

is the relevant Department of the Home Office), but it is clear that collaboration between the authorities in different countries needs a great deal of development yet, though isolated examples of such co-operation are mentioned, as for instance between Holland and Germany and between Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. It is suggested as one practical step forward that where the police watch the movements of notorious or suspected traffickers with some vigilance a constant exchange of information on this point would be of considerable value.

Another important feature of one of the international Agreements, that of 1904, is the undertaking entered into by the signatory States to exercise supervision at important railway stations and ports with a view to frustrating would-be traffickers and giving help and protection to women and girls travelling from one country to another. This duty falls to some extent on Government officials, such as immigration officers, and in some countries at any rate valuable co-operation is given by voluntary societies working in close touch with the authorities. Liverpool provides instructive examples of this kind of co-operation, and mention is made in the report of a hostel at Montreal which offers suitable and cheap accommodation for

women travelling between the United States and Canada. But in the case of a measure of this kind everything depends on the efficiency with which it is administered, and it is clear from the reports of the investigators that, while some countries are doing all that could reasonably be expected of them, others are doing very little indeed.

It is just, however, to the voluntary societies to quote the tribute paid by the Body of Experts to their activities. "The many national associations set up in different countries," they write, "have exercised a most salutary influence on public opinion, and have contributed in a number of countries towards raising the general standard of morality. Many of these associations have also brought their influence to bear on national legislation. They are responsible for a number of improvements and for the introduction of effective reforms. This applies, for instance, to the employment of women police, whose usefulness has been so clearly proved. It will be seen from the second part of this report that the countries in which the traffic and commercialised vice have been most successfully combated are also those in which the charitable organisations have been most active. This is specially and clearly brought out in the evidence of the investigation in Canada.

The report shows the many-sided and intense activity of voluntary agencies and the favourable condition in the country as regard traffic. The same situation is found in other countries, which have not for these very reasons been the subject of our investigation. It is stated that in the Netherlands, for example, where the work on behalf of boys and youths has been carried on for many years and has resulted in a high standard of morality for men, the traffic is now unknown. We might mention others."

Other Articles in the Agreement of 1924 deal with the repatriation of foreign prostitutes, Article IV, for instance, providing that where a woman cannot pay the expenses of repatriation herself, and has no responsible person in a position to do so for her, the cost of her repatriation shall be borne by the country she is leaving as far as its own frontier, and for the remainder of the journey by the country of which she is a native. This is a rather elaborate arrangement, though it is no doubt not difficult for the necessary provision to be made by negotiation between the authorities of the one country and the consul of the other. However that may be, it is clear that this particular provision of the 1904 Agreement is largely ignored. Japan indeed appears to be the only

country to have adopted the policy of regularly repatriating its women found engaged in prostitution abroad. A good many countries refuse admission to known or suspected prostitutes or deport them when discovered. Deportation, however, simply means putting the woman across the frontier, and is, therefore, entirely different from repatriation, which means sending her back to her own country and where possible to her home if she has one.

It is obvious that the dangers besetting a foreign prostitute are just as great if she is deported into another country as if she remains where she is. It is not pretended indeed that deportation has any other object than to rid a country of undesirables. Repatriation is redemptive, in intention at any rate, and there can be no question that a girl who is prepared to adopt some other means of livelihood than prostitution has a better chance of finding it in her own country than in another where she has no friends to turn to, and whose language she very likely does not speak. There is every reason therefore why pressure should be exerted, through the League of Nations or otherwise, to secure a much more general and much more effective execution of the 1904 Agreement in regard to repatriation.

Replies received from different Governments by the League's Traffic in Women and Children Committee in regard to the expulsion of foreign prostitutes show how widely the practice of different countries differs in this matter. Pride of place may properly be given to the reply from the Argentine Government :—

Buenos Ayres,
September 24th, 1926.

(Translation from the Spanish.)

With reference to your letter No. C.L.81 of July 6th, 1926, requesting information as to the existence in the Argentine of private organisations occupying themselves with the protection of foreign prostitutes, I have the honour to inform you that, under the relevant regulations contained in the immigration laws now in force, prostitutes are prohibited from entering the country, and that, consequently, there are no associations for their protection.

(Signed) E. Restelli.

When it is remembered that the report of the investigators shows that not less than 75 per cent. of the prostitutes registered in the Argentine in the years 1921-2-3 were foreign, the full flavour of this declaration will be appreciated.

To go to the other extreme, Holland has explained fully the provision made for the assistance of foreign prostitutes about to be expelled from that country. The names of three voluntary societies prepared to offer the needed assistance are given, but the difficulties in the way of expulsion are at the same time explained clearly. Since expelled women incur no penalty if they re-enter the country, they frequently do re-enter it, and so many foreigners at one time poured in from Germany that the Dutch prostitutes, alarmed by the competition, denounced the intruders to the police. In Holland, as in Great Britain, difficulties were often avoided by *pro forma* marriages to Dutchmen. The expulsion system, therefore, has been largely ineffective.

It is pointed out by Poland that what is really needed is provision for receiving a woman in the country to which she belongs and to which she is being sent back, and the Swiss Government emphasises the same point from the opposite end, contending that what is needed in Switzerland is not assistance for foreign women about to be expelled from the country but for Swiss prostitutes sent back from other countries.

Another measure, the importance of which is abundantly apparent to anyone who has studied the

reports of the investigators on individual countries, is that providing for supervision over agencies which find employment for women and girls abroad. The evils arising from engagements in travelling concert companies or theatrical troupes, to take the most obvious illustration, are twofold. In many cases, particularly when what is in question is employment in a cabaret or night club or dancing establishment, the engagement is simply a cloak for regular if clandestine prostitution. The report on the United States, for example, describes a so-called theatrical employment agency in New York where girls are regularly supplied for countries like Panama and Mexico and for purposes regarding which there is no serious attempt at concealment.

In many cases, on the other hand, the employment is genuine, but the conditions of life, and frequently the financial instability of the whole concern, expose the girls to perpetual temptations to which they all too commonly yield. Illustrations of that are the story told by a girl at Havre of how her company had been left penniless at Alexandria, with the result that all the girls took to prostitution for a livelihood, or the observation of a madame at Havana that she never needed to go out of her way to recruit girls, because there were

always theatrical companies passing through the town.

Some countries have taken effective action under this head. Austria, for example, has its public employment bureaus, which deal with engagements abroad as well as at home, and its private agencies are under the supervision of the public authorities. Consent of the Court, moreover, is required whenever persons under eighteen seek employment abroad.

In Great Britain girls under sixteen are reasonably well protected, for no girls under this age can take employment abroad in dancing establishments or similar places of entertainment without a licence from a magistrate at Bow Street. The age, however, might well be raised to 18, for girls between 16 and 18 are often in greater danger than those a couple of years younger. It should be added that in Great Britain considerable vigilance is exercised in the issue of passports.

In view of the wide variation in the practices of different countries in regard to this matter there is room for representations by the League's Advisory Committee to all Governments. That view has been taken by the Committee itself, and was in June, 1927, endorsed by the League Council,

which adopted the following recommendation of the Committee :—

> " The Council should invite the various Governments to supervise conditions under which girls under 18 are allowed to go abroad with contracts of employment and, in particular, to insist on the strict enforcement of emigration laws and regulations. The Secretariat should enquire, with the assistance of the International Labour Office, into the methods adopted in different countries for protecting girls travelling abroad under contract of employment in places of entertainment."

It may be hoped, therefore, that more active steps will be taken in most countries regarding the supervision of employment agencies.

The Body of Experts sums up its views on the subject of engagements in places of amusement abroad in the following declaration :—

> " In some countries many of these places are haunts of dissipated men, and the girls employed in them to dance and sing are expected to act as prostitutes. In some instances we had evidence that the girls are actually required to register as such. The contracts also are often drawn up in

terms so harsh that the girl who signs one has little or no security. Governments would be well advised to protect their nationals against victimisation of this character by providing for the examination and approval of the conditions of employment before girls under a specified age are allowed to take engagements of this character. It might be considered whether the matter should be made one for international agreement."

Effective supervision over immigrants and emigrants is essential if traffickers are to be frustrated and respectable women and girls protected from the dangers that may easily beset them when travelling alone in strange countries. The whole question of migration is in the hands of the International Labour Organisation, and there is reason to hope that as a result of the efforts of that body increased protection will be afforded to immigrants, especially to women and girls, through the provision of adequate staffs of inspectors of both sexes. It is mentioned in the report on Canada that the provision of directresses on board ships and conductresses on the long-distance trains has proved a valuable protective measure. Incidentally, one of the arguments for retaining the visa

system is the difficulty it creates for persons travelling for other than legitimate purposes.

"One of the greatest safeguards," say the experts, "for young immigrants of both sexes is that the conditions of life and work in countries which receive them shall be made known to them by the dissemination of accurate information in the countries from which these young immigrants are drawn. Organised methods of bringing them into touch with protective agencies when they land in a new country are also required. Some Governments do a great deal in this direction, and many voluntary associations perform an admirable work in helping young people to find their footing. The contact between official and voluntary effort could well be strengthened."

As a measure calculated to further the fight against the traffic the employment of policewomen deserves and is receiving careful study. The League's Advisory Committee in 1926 obtained information on this subject from thirty-three different Governments. The answers received in response to the League's circular letter disclosed the fact that of the States replying seventeen (Argentine, Australia, Czechoslovakia, Danzig, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Great Britain,

Irish Free State, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Rumania, Sweden, Switzerland, United States) did already employ women in their police forces, while thirteen (South Africa, China, Dominican Republic, France, Greece, India, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Monaco, Siam, Venezuela) did not. Two of these, however, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela, though not as yet employing policewomen, declared themselves in favour of the principle. Of the remaining three, Belgium and Poland stated that there was nothing to prevent the employment of policewomen in their countries, but so far they appear not to have been so employed ; in Iceland they are called in as need arises in specific cases.

The exact position and duties of a policewoman vary to some extent in different countries. In Great Britain, the United States and elsewhere they are regularly enrolled members of the ordinary police force. In some other countries they discharge only special duties at police headquarters. In most cases their chief duty is the supervision of public morals and the handling of cases of sexual offences, including work in connection with the prevention of traffic in women and children, while in some countries women police are employed to patrol parks, public resorts and places of amuse-

ment, and to deal generally with public order, especially in regard to children and adolescents.

Certain replies from individual countries have a special interest. South Africa appears to be the only country where the experiment has been tried and abandoned. It is stated that while police-women " were found useful in a way, it could not be said that they were an unqualified success, and their employment was discontinued." Women police are employed in all the Australian States, except Queensland, and in each case emphatic testimony is borne to their value. Czechoslo-vakia employs women police particularly to deal with cases of girls who have gone astray and show a tendency towards prostitution, if not already prostitutes. In such cases enquiries are made into the cause of the girl's downfall and the conditions of her life, and in the light of the information thus acquired suitable steps are taken in agreement with the parents, guardians and chancery courts.

France and Greece are two countries which declare themselves definitely against the employ-ment of policewomen. Two enquiries were carried out in France in 1924, but " the adminis-trative authorities responsible for public safety are entirely opposed to women being given an active part in supervising the suppression of prostitution,

and it is exceedingly doubtful whether women's co-operation in this service would be favourably received by public opinion. On the other hand, women can do very good work in connection with the organisations engaged in the moral or material protection of young girls and children, and in actual practice frequent appeals are made to their willing and devoted assistance." The reference here is clearly to voluntary associations. Greece returns a curious answer to the effect that " conditions of family life in Greece and social prejudices would prevent women with the necessary qualities from engaging in the supervision of prostitution. One would, therefore, have to employ women who had themselves been prostitutes, and this would not make for success."

In Great Britain the employment of police-women has made greater progress, the women members of the London Metropolitan Police Force, for example, having increased from 20 in 1924 to 50 at the end of 1927. The question of the employment of women in the police force remains within the discretion of individual police authorities (boroughs or counties) and there is no uniformity in the matter. In the United States, similarly, different States and different municipalities pursue their own methods. An

enquiry addressed to 268 cities showed that of these 58 employed no women in their police departments, the remaining 210 employing between them 355 police matrons, 395 women police, and 22 performing both functions. A police matron conducts interviews and fulfils other functions at headquarters, while a policewoman does regular patrol work in the streets.

The fact that as many as seventeen countries are actually employing policewomen does not imply that this development has yet attained any considerable dimensions, for most of the countries concerned have only a handful of women in their police service. In Australia, for example, New South Wales employs four police women ; Victoria four ; South Australia eleven ; Western Australia, five ; Tasmania one ; and Queensland none. All that can be said, therefore, is that the experiment has proved its value and deserves to be extended.

CHAPTER XI

THE MAISON TOLÉRÉE

So far it has been a question of putting into more effective operation the international conventions already negotiated, and there can be no reasonable doubt that if the measures embodied in those conventions were administered as it was hoped they would be the traffic in women and children would shrink to much smaller dimensions.

But there are many steps which might with advantage be taken outside the scope of the conventions themselves. The centre of the traffic system is the licensed house. That fact has been established beyond possibility of dispute, and the evidence furnished on the point is of vital importance to the whole of the League's future work, for once a direct connection between the international traffic and the licensed house in an individual country is acknowledged, it becomes impossible to warn the League off the subject of licensed houses on the ground that that is a purely domestic question. The attempt has been made, by France

in particular, but there is no longer any prospect of its succeeding. Replying, in November, 1926, to an enquiry issued by direction of the League Council, the French Government wrote :

> " While the problem of prostitution may ultimately, as M. Labrousse (the French representative) indicated before the Fifth Commission of the last Assembly, be examined as part of a scientific study of wide scope, the regulation of prostitution and maisons de tolérance, regarded in its administrative aspect, remains, in the view of the French Government, a question of internal order, belonging to the domestic legislation of States or the control of autonomous administrative organs within their borders. It lies outside the competence of the Consultative Committee (of the League).

If that contention could be sustained, the League's fight against the traffic in women would never attain more than very limited success, for unless an attack can be made on the licensed house system the attack on the traffic will be made to little purpose. That becomes decisively clear from the replies received to a questionnaire circulated by the League Council in 1923, so clear indeed that the " domestic jurisdiction " plea in

regard to licensed houses is not likely to be heard of again. Out of the 51 States which replied to the questionnaire, 7 contented themselves with a mere acknowledgment, and 2 (Irish Free State and Southern Rhodesia) said simply that the question did not arise, since there were no foreign prostitutes, or next to none, in their territories. But the remaining 42, including countries like Great Britain, Germany, Italy, the United States, Brazil, the Argentine Republic, Japan, sent the required information, embodied in many cases in communications of considerable length. In some of the countries, of course, licensed houses still exist. In others they never did or have been abolished by law.

Among States where the licensed house system has disappeared, three or four speak with emphasis on the connection between the system and the traffic. Poland, for example, is categorical. Houses in that country, according to the official reply, were abolished in 1922, because "the houses constituted the centre of the international traffic in women." Holland declared that "as to the relation between the suppression of licensed houses and the international traffic in women, experience in Holland has shown that the raison d'être of this traffic was the existence of these

houses, and that their suppression has led to the almost complete disappearance of the traffic. The agents of the proprietors of these houses always found in them a regular outlet for the women and girls they had engaged." Czechoslovakia, in a particularly striking communication, states, inter alia, " The system of licensed houses has the effect of spreading depravity and shamelessness among the younger generation and equally of facilitating procuration and the traffic in women. The habitués of these houses are perpetually demanding fresh women. That leads to an intense traffic and a ceaseless exchange of prostitutes between the houses. If there were no licensed houses, the traffic in women would be reduced to a minimum."

These are countries that have abolished the licensed-house system. Others that have taken the same course state that they did so for moral and humanitarian reasons unconnected with the traffic. When it is a question of countries where the system survives, the Governments concerned naturally seek to justify their policy and can hardly be expected to damn it by admitting that it fosters the traffic in women. It is all the more significant, therefore, to find a country like Belgium sending in a report which declares frankly that, " while claiming the patronage of the State, which is what

regulation virtually means, the licensed houses are perpetually occupied in changing and renewing their personnel, and thus constitute a permanent raison d'être for the traffic in women. They apply for this purpose to dealers specialising in this kind of supply."

The report from Germany is candid and judicial. Opinion in that country is divided. Some police authorities, it is stated, hold that the suppression of the houses would help to get rid of the traffic, "because the houses in question, in order to carry on their business, need to procure women and renew the supply from time to time, and therefore provide a field of activity for the traffickers." Other authorities say they have never observed any connection between the houses and the traffic, others again that the system of regulation actually impedes the traffickers, and others still that it makes it easier to discover them. It is significant, however, that Germany has since (October, 1927) abolished her licensed houses altogether.

Various countries, notably Hungary and Japan, deny any connection between the licensed-house system and the traffic. Egypt admits that in her Canal Province there exists a regular organisation for the recruitment of women. Portugal explains

her licensed-house system, but adds that "the results achieved are unhappily not satisfactory, seeing that the steps taken do not prevent the traffic in women." Spain considers the data available insufficient for a final opinion, but observes that the social agency chiefly concerned, the "Royal Patronage for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women," regards the licensed-house system and the traffic as largely interdependent.

From this accumulation of evidence, one conclusion emerges. The League of Nations can and must concern itself with the whole question of licensed-houses, and is now in fact doing so. Public opinion has moved rapidly at Geneva in this connection, as is shown by the fact that the Eighth Assembly in September, 1927, unanimously adopted a resolution by which it

> "requests the Traffic in Women and Children Committee to examine as soon as possible the question of the desirability of recommending to all Governments the abolition of the system of the licensed house."

This is a very notable step forward, and it should not be long before the pressure from Geneva proves irresistible, at any rate to European countries, though even in some of them it may encounter the

kind of objection put forward, in a quite sympathetic memorandum, by the Japanese Government, explaining that "if Japan still maintains the system of the regulation of licensed houses it is because the origin of this régime is rooted in a centuries-old tradition, and the sudden abolition of this regulation would have serious social reactions, for it would in Japan be practically equivalent to the complete suppression of prostitution itself." Japan is, therefore, concentrating on raising the regulation system to the highest possible standard, but it has been decided in principle that the number of houses shall not be increased.

Short, however, of the complete abolition of licensed houses—and that process must necessarily take time—there is at least one intermediate step which would go far to meet the situation created by the connection of the houses with the traffic. On paper at any rate an agreement that foreign women should in all countries be excluded from licensed houses would check the traffic almost as effectively as the complete abolition of the houses. That was realised as long ago as 1922, the League of Nations Assembly in that year adopting a resolution calling on the Council to direct the Consultative Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children.

> " to consider whether, pending the abolition of the system, it could be agreed that no foreign woman should be employed or carry on her profession as a prostitute in any licensed house."

The effect the adoption of such a proposal would have will be realised when it is remembered that in Brazil the proportion of foreign women in the licensed houses reaches 80 per cent. But while the League resolution did stimulate certain countries to take the desired step, nothing like general action in that direction can be recorded, largely, no doubt, because complete abolition is making greater headway than this partial measure of reform.

CHAPTER XII

PROTECTING THE CHILD

One reform calculated, in the opinion of the Body of Experts, to restrict the traffic in women in some degree is the raising of the age of marriage and the age of consent in many countries.

The two questions are distinct, and they must be considered separately. The age of consent means the age below which no girl can consent to her own violation. Any man, therefore, having relations with a girl below the statutory age commits a punishable offence, even if the girl assented to the act. This applies as much to prostitution as to any other sexual relationship, though in some countries the statutory age is much lower in the case of a girl not previously chaste. Where that reservation is lacking, as in Great Britain, relations with a prostitute under the statutory age constitute a punishable offence. Consequently, any raising of the age of consent means raising the age at which a woman can take to prostitution, for no man will risk the penalties he would incur by con-

sorting with a girl below the age rather than with one above it.

This is primarily a question affecting ordinary prostitution rather than the international traffic, but it has a definite, if indirect, bearing on the latter none the less. A low age of consent usually means an apathetic social conscience, a high age a sense of responsibility which will express itself in another sphere in effective measures against traffickers. It is not entirely an accident that in Great Britain, one of the countries where the age of consent is highest, the traffickers, by their own admission, find it hardest to earn a living.

But a high age of consent means more than that. The League investigators found that traffic in minors was far from uncommon, and that in some cases children even below what might be considered a reasonable age of consent were involved. That is still more true of girls going abroad in entertainment companies. Such children are even more helpless than girls a few years older when they find themselves alone in a foreign country, and it is proportionately more hopeless for them to escape from a life of prostitution if once they have taken to it. The raising of the age by even a single year may, therefore, be of substantial value.

If it be asked whether in any country prostitution is practised by girls below what might be regarded as a reasonable consent-age, the answer is that it undoubtedly is. No one ever has suggested that the age of consent in Great Britain —16 years—is inordinately high. There have, indeed, been many attempts to raise it to 17 or 18. (They have so far been defeated by the argument that many girls between 16 and 17 are calculating and unprincipled enough to tempt young men to have relations with them, and then levy blackmail under threat of exposure.) But there are thousands of girls under 16 in different countries practising prostitution regularly, many of them (in Portugal, for example) as inmates of licensed houses. It is no doubt true that many of them would take to prostitution after 16 if they did not before, but quite apart from the scandal of child-prostitutes every extra year a girl remains virtuous increases by a little the prospect of her remaining so altogether.

How much room for reform remains in the matter of the age of consent is demonstrated by a study of data on this subject collected by the League in 1926. Climate may no doubt rightly be regarded as a factor in this connection, physical development being earlier in warm countries, but

no such explanation as that can be adduced for the astonishing enactment in force in Estonia, where the age of consent is 10, or 14 if the child is still chaste. It would appear, therefore, that the first man to consort with a child of 10 is culpable but anyone subsequently following suit is guiltless of any offences, provided the child acquiesces.

Of the 45 States which furnished the information required, only four, other than Great Britain and Ireland, fix the age of consent as high as 16, and none higher, though in parts of the United States it is 18. (In others it is as low as 12, and in Florida 10, with an alternative higher age in cases where the girl is virgin.) In Germany the age of consent is 14, in France 13, in Queensland, Spain and Italy it is only 12. Where special circumstances expose a girl to special difficulties—if, for example, she is seduced by a guardian, or an ecclesiastic or a member of her own household—the offence is in many countries punishable up to a much higher age.

The marriage-age is another question, and it affects the international traffic more directly, for it has been shown that not only fictitious marriages, but those legally contracted, form part of the trafficker's regular armoury, though in the latter case he usually disappears as soon as the relation-

ship has served its purpose of getting the girl unchallenged across frontiers as a married woman. It is naturally easier to cajole or intimidate a child into marriage than an older girl. The raising of the marriage age, therefore, is undoubtedly calculated to make life a little more difficult for the trafficker relying on the expedient of marriage.

If Great Britain heads the list in the matter of the age of consent, she stands very near the bottom of it in the matter of the age of marriage. The marriage age for boys in Great Britain is 14 and for girls 12. Marriages contracted below those ages are subsequently voidable at the instance of either party. To leave no contingency unprovided for, English law lays it down that marriages contracted under the age of 7 are not merely voidable, but void. Marriages below the age of 16 in Great Britain are rare, but there are enough of them to give rise to a strong demand for the raising of the age, particularly since it is much more difficult to press for reform in certain countries (notably India) where a low marriage age does have serious consequences, so long as it is open to such countries to cite the British law as justification.

The Home Secretary, Sir William Joynson-Hicks, discussing the question in 1927 with a deputation from different women's societies who

desired the age fixed at 16 for both sexes, said that in the last 12 years there had been only 292 marriages of males or females under 16, or an average of about 25 a year. The figure for 1924 was unusually low—19, and for 1926 unusually high—34. Any reluctance to raise the age was due to unwillingness to make it difficult for a child irregularly conceived to be born in wedlock. This is met in many countries by giving some high authority, ecclesiastic or civil, the power to grant special permission for a marriage in which one of the parties is below the legal age. The deputation referred to, however, urged that even a low age, so long as it was absolute, was preferable to that.

In India, where marriages are contracted almost in infancy, the point of importance is the age at which consummation is permitted. Under the law at present in force (adopted in 1925) that age is 13, the age of consent in the case of relations outside wedlock being 14 (both, it will be observed, are higher than the marriage-age for girls in Great Britain). A Bill was introduced by Sir Hari Singh Gour in 1927, designed to fix the marriage-age at 14 and the age of consent outside marriage as 16.

As to other countries, the highest marriage-ages for women are 18 in Denmark, Iceland, Norway,

Sweden and Switzerland and in parts of the United States. The lowest age, 7 in the formerly Prussian provinces of Poland, is fantastic. In South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, the age for women is 12, as in Great Britain, and in Hungary and Italy it is the same. Turkey puts it as high as 15 for both sexes, and Japan fixes 17 for men and 15 for women.

The relation between the age of marriage and the age of consent is an interesting question which it would be irrelevant to discuss here. As a matter of statistics it may be noted that in 22 out of 38 countries from which the League received reports, the marriage age is the higher. In 8, including Great Britain, the age of consent is the higher. In the remaining 8 the two are identical. It may be observed that where the marriage age is the lower, there is some inducement to a man who desires relations with a girl below the age of consent but above the age of marriage (in Great Britain, below 16 but over 12) to keep himself on the right side of the law by persuading the girl to contract a marriage which, under such circumstances, has the maximum prospect of turning out disastrously.

CHAPTER XII

THE PUBLIC'S PART

Though the international traffic in women may with advantage be isolated temporarily for the purpose of special study, it can never be permanently dissociated from the larger problem out of which it has gradually developed. The traffic exists, on a relatively small scale, because prostitution exists, on a relatively large scale. That relation needs to be emphasised, for prolonged concentration of attention on such documents as the two parts of the League Report on the traffic has a curious psychological effect, the study of particular aspects and accretions and perversions of prostitution tending, for a moment at any rate, to produce by contrast a kind of subconscious condonation of prostitution itself as something fundamental and normal.

Such an attitude is not to be justified. Prostitution is as old almost as humanity. The Old Testament makes us early familiar with it. So does every history of ancient Greece and ancient

Rome. It is easy to dismiss it with a shrug of the shoulders and a cynical reference to "the oldest profession in the world." That tolerant indifference can rest only on blindness to palpable facts. This is no question of pharisaical censoriousness over occasional irregularities in individual lives. There is often more room there for charity then for condemnation. But when it is a matter of the indiscriminate sale of a woman's body for money to any comer at any hour ("Prostitutes in licensed houses," says one report, "are compelled to put themselves at any moment at the disposal of any man, however repulsive"), then every element of decency and self-respect in the nature of man must rise up in protest.

There is little need to dwell on the evils of prostitution. They stand out naked and unconcealed. But as to the social effects of the system, a reply sent by the Czechoslovak Government to a League questionnaire in 1924 exposes the consequences of prostitution in language so striking for an official document that certain passages may with advantage be quoted as they stand. The reply deals in particular with the licensed house system, but it applies with no great modification to countries where women have to rely on solicitation in the streets or restaurants and places of amuse-

ment. Licensed houses are merely a convenience, and the clientèle frequenting them is not materially different from that acquired by the woman of the streets.

"It is a known fact," it is declared, "that licensed houses are mainly frequented by boys of about 20; it is by no means rare indeed for boys of 16 or even less to resort to them regularly. It is an established fact that venereal diseases are detected among secondary school boys, often in the sixth form, sometimes even in the fourth. Life in licensed houses exercises a pernicious effect on the girls, both morally and physically. The unlimited consumption of alcohol, which is one of the necessary conditions of the profession; a life spent in unventilated rooms, poisoned in addition by cigar smoke; a life of idleness unredeemed by any semblance of elevated impulses; exhaustion through excesses and lack of sleep; ruin the health even of the strongest girls in a few years."

Most of that judgment applies in a lesser degree to the prostitute of the streets who takes men home to her rooms, though she does by the nature of things get a little fresh air. But she, as much as the inmate of the licensed house, spreads venereal disease broadcast among the men resorting to her

—an aspect of the subject too large and specialised to be discussed with advantage here.

It is manifest, therefore, that even a decisive victory over the traffic would be no justification for ceasing to combat prostitution. Something, no doubt, can be done through legislation. It is true enough that you cannot make men sober by Act of Parliament. But you can by Act of Parliament remove some of the incentives to insobriety. In the same way legislation will not make men and women moral—sexually or in any other sphere—but it may at least banish some of the temptations to immorality. The problem of what steps are possible is by no means simple. Should prostitution itself be treated as a punishable misdemeanour? It practically nowhere is, for a woman is supposed to be entitled to do what she will with her own, provided she does it in such a way as to avoid offending or shocking the feelings of the community.

But the question, of course, has been discussed. The official Committee on Street Offences sitting in London while these lines are being written has given some attention to it. And in certain States of the United States of America there are actually laws against prostitution as such. A report presented to the League of Nations by the American

Government in January, 1927, contains the following important passage :

" Increasing emphasis is now being given to the part that men play in prostitution. An amendment to existing legislation is being much discussed as the next step needed to further promote the policy of abolition as well as equal treatment of men and women. Under the proposed amendment the man who pays a woman for immoral relations is made equally guilty with the woman who accepts payment for such acts, so that by legal definition the man, as well as the woman concerned, is made a prostitute. Such laws have been passed in twelve States,* and a Bill of this sort, sponsored by the Committee of Fourteen (a semi-official social reform council) was introduced in the New York State Legislature in 1924 and 1925, but failed to pass. The Committee is continuing its advocacy in favour of the proposal, which is supported by such organisations as the State Department of Health and [here follow the names of a number of important voluntary organisations]."

* Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, South Dakota, Ohio, Vermont, Wisconsin. The offence in these cases consists in receiving a man for purposes of prostitution, with or without remuneration. Maryland convicts only when remuneration is involved.

This is a pioneer movement that will be watched with interest. But short of the complete suppression of prostitution—and laws to that effect would be practically impossible to enforce unless every irregular union outside legal marriage is to be condemned as punishable, for prostitution does not take place in public, and domestic visits by the police would never be tolerated—something might be done to reduce it in volume and impede its practice. The prostitute to-day has not merely to supply a demand but to create one. In this profession, like every other, "it pays to advertise." In a country like France the advertisement is open and undisguised, periodicals of the lower type containing pages of what in England would be called technically "small ads." framed on a regular and recognised model. The following, for example, are taken from a page filled with such entries in the current issue of a well-known Paris magazine :—

RELATIONS

2 Rue C—— 3*e* étage t.l.j. de 1 à 7h. sauf dim.
(every day from 1 to 7, Sundays excepted).

RELATIONS

Mme. J—— 1 Rue S——, t.l.j. Dim. et Fêt. entresol droite de 10 à 19h.
(every day including Sunday and feasts).

In Great Britain, of course, such advertisements would not be allowed, though some purporting to call attention to the merits of certain manicure or massage establishments fall under grave suspicion.

Where, as in Great Britain, a girl's only form of advertisement is to display herself in the streets, the situation is singularly hard to deal with. The streets are obviously free to anyone, and the only action possible—the action which, in fact, is taken—is to prosecute for solicitation, and that can only be done on the ground that the act annoys or is calculated to create disturbance. Even in case of conviction the penalty is only a 40s. fine, and as the American report referred to above points out, the effect of fining a prostitute is to stimulate her to ply her trade with the greater vigour in order to replenish her depleted purse. The whole question of whether and how prostitution can be further restricted by legislation is under the consideration of a Departmental Committee on Street Offences, and till that reports there is not much virtue in canvassing the problem further.

In any case the question, though by no means negligible, is only secondary, for legislation can never be the sole, nor even the principal, weapon against such an evil as prostitution. If public opinion cannot make its condemnation effective

not all the laws in the statute-book will stamp the institution out. And when it comes to public opinion much more than judgments on prostitution itself are involved. This is not the place to discuss questions so fundamental as the tremendous urge of sex and what one must believe (or despair of humanity) is the still more tremendous power of man's spirit to check and direct the impulses of his mind and body. But prostitution, it must be insisted, is no isolated phenomenon. It is a symptom of a diseased society. The healthier the society, the less formidable will prostitution as a social institution be. For prostitution, even in England, where its more repellent forms are almost totally absent, has no redeeming feature. Prostitutes themselves may have many. A life which of necessity dulls all finer instincts can still be consistent with a kindly temperament and readiness to hold out a helping hand to a friend in trouble. And though thousands of girls sink lower and lower till they flicker miserably out after a wretched and premature old age of middle life, many on the other hand, as Flexner's researches show, do abandon the life completely and apparently settle down as married women or ordinary wage-earners. But to find virtues in prostitutes does not mean finding virtues in prostitution.

Much no doubt remains to be said and written on the relationships of men and women, though nothing ever said or written yet can shake the conviction of those who hold that the highest form of human relationship is the association of one man with one woman on a basis of loyalty and love within the circle of a family they have created, developing its intimate and individual life in contact with a larger world but unsubmerged by it. But those who believe that modern society calls for some different and looser tie—free union, temporary marriages, easy divorce—will not deny that the one intolerable and indefensible relationship is the sale of the woman's body, not to one man but to a score of different men it may be in a week, for money. The women who supply that demand, and at least as much the men who create it, are a corrupted and corrupting element in society.

The extent to which standards can in time be lowered is arrestingly shown in a declaration by the League's investigators already quoted. "Young men in ———," they write, "have been taught for generations to look on prostitutes and houses of prostitution as constituting an essential element in the social life of every community." This passage has been deleted from the final edition of the report, presumably

out of consideration for the country concerned, whose name is therefore omitted here.

The only cure is for society to raise its standards. Is it raising them ? That again is a question far too large to enter on. Limit it to England, limit it to London, it still opens up fields too large for exploration. The modern novel, the modern play, the modern film—are they calculated to stimulate the higher impulses in the individual or something a good deal lower ? Some experienced authorities declare unhesitatingly that there has been a marked degeneration in London since the war, a degeneration of society—and society as most of us think of it consists of everyone except ourselves. Yet it is so many millions of ourselves that compose society. A discussion of prostitution does not involve discussion of the individual lives of respectable citizens. So at least respectable citizens will at once point out. And in so doing they will be both right and wrong—right for obvious reasons, wrong because the individual makes society, and society makes conditions and traditions and standards in which prostitution will be tolerated or not. Concentrate the mind of the casual novel-reader, the casual theatre-goer, the casual film-habitué on sex, and in particular abnormal and irregular sex relationships, as a mere survey of the titles of the

books on any French bookstall inevitably does, and you are creating the impulses which in a minority, greater or lesser in volume, will demand ultimately the gratifications that prostitution provides.

But the human mind cannot be left a vacuum. If it is not to be filled with something unhealthy it must be filled with something definitely and positively healthy. The First Part of the Report of the Body of Experts contains on that point one passage charged with practical and unpretentious wisdom. After dwelling on the influences favourable to low moral standards " such as the unbridled development of pleasure-seeking, low-class theatres, dancing-halls and immoral publications " the report continues : " In general, influences which lift the mind to higher planes, providing ideals of truth and beauty, have been urged as important factors in combating the traffic, because they engender a moral force which helps both men and women to develop control of desires which cannot be gratified by the practices of prostitution without disaster both to the individuals and to society."

That is profoundly true. It does not need the dicta of psychologists to establish the truth that where the mind is always going the body will be at least under some temptation to go too. Most

men are psychologists enough to discover that for themselves. And to what the anonymous compiler of the League of Nations Report has said may be added one other expression of opinion, or rather of counsel to any who have to face the business of living through fifty or sixty or seventy years of human life. A Greek-speaking Roman citizen once wrote: "Anything true, anything that wins respect, anything clean, anything sound, anything that commends itself, anything well spoken of, any high principle, anything laudable—concentrate on that." The fact that the letter in which that advice is given happens to be bound up with the canonised scriptures does not detract from the soundness of judgment or the psychological truth of the injunction. It represents, as it were, one end of a scale of moral standards reaching down in unbroken and uninterrupted sequence to regions where a host of sordid evils find their home—and among them common prostitution. The mistake is to think that an impassable gulf separates one end of the scale from the other. It does not. The gradation is smooth and easy and the slope runs downwards.

INDEX

Abbott, Miss Grace, 28
Advertisements, 264
Algeria, 153–7
Allied Troops, 94
Arab Prostitutes, 158
Argentine Republic, 215–224
Artistes, 50, 80, 84, 98, 102, 109, 118, 122, 144, 183–4, 198, 202
Austria, 115–9

Balfour, Mr. A. J., 27
Barcelona, 84, 85
Belgium, 71–4
Bogus Marriages, 53, 63, 97, 114, 134
Brazil, 204–9
Briand, M., 81,
Buenos Ayres, 77, 99, 113, 118, 216, 221
Butler, Josephine, 25

Canada, 171–5
Capitulations, 161
Cardew Hostel, 65
Chamberlain, Sir Austen, 32, 35
Consent, Age of, 252–5
Contagious Diseases Act, 58, 59
Conventions against Traffic, 37–40
Criminal Law Amendment Acts, 20, 59
Crowdy, Dame Rachel, xii
Cuba, 40, 193–8
Czechoslovakia, 111–4

Danzig, 129
Debt Slavery, 106, 120, 148
Deportation, 231
Domestic Servants, 120, 145, 165

Economic Factors, 18, 52, 121
Egypt, 161–9
Employment Agencies, 117, 183, 235–7

Flexner, Dr. Abraham, ix, 19, 22
France, 74–83

Germany, 93–9
Great Britain, 58–65
Greece, 142–146

Harris, Mr. S. W., 29
Holland, 66–70
Houses of Prostitution, types of, 67, 162, 189
Hungary, 119–124

Indecent Photographs, 95–6
India, 169, 257
Italy, 103–110

Japan, 231, 250
Johnson, Mr. Bascom, 30

Latvia, 126–8
Le Luc, M., 83
Licensed Houses and Traffic, 160, 209, 246, 249
—— System, 244–51

Mann Law, 175
Marriage, Age of, 255-58

Mexico, 188–193
Minors, Traffic in, 153, 164, 206

Novices, Traffic in, 133, 148, 156, 159, 223

Orange Smuggling, 127

Panama, 106, 199–204
Poland, 129, 136
Police, 115, 123, 145, 147, 204, 220
Policewomen, 131, 239–243
Portugal, 87–91
Prague, 111, 112
Prostitutes, Classes of, 137
Prostitution, Causes of, 18, 19
——, Finance of, 200, 217
" Prostitution in Europe," ix
Prostitution, Punishment of, 263
Publicity, Importance of, xi, 36, 42
Public Opinion, 266

Questionnaire, on Traffic in Women, 30, 207

Repatriation of Prostitutes, 231
Rio de Janeiro, 114
Rumania, 136–142

Sale of Girls, 143, 150, 160, 181–2
Seasonal Demand, 86, 101, 112, 154, 165, 172, 190, 199
Semi-professionals, 51, 62, 76, 138–9
Snow, Dr. W. F., 29, 34
Soviet Russia, 128
Spain, 83–86
Stowaways, 110, 165
Stresemann, Dr., 33
Stunden-Hotel, 115
Switzerland, 99–103

Tongs, 173, 180
Traffic in Women, Definition of, 28
Traffickers, Definition of, 44
Travel Precautions, 229, 238
Tunis, 157–161
Turkey, 146–151

United States, 175–186
Uruguay, 40, 209–215

Vandervelde, M. Emile, 35
Voluntary Societies, 230, 234, 239

Webb, Mrs. Sidney, x